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BRM

FEBRUARY 2025

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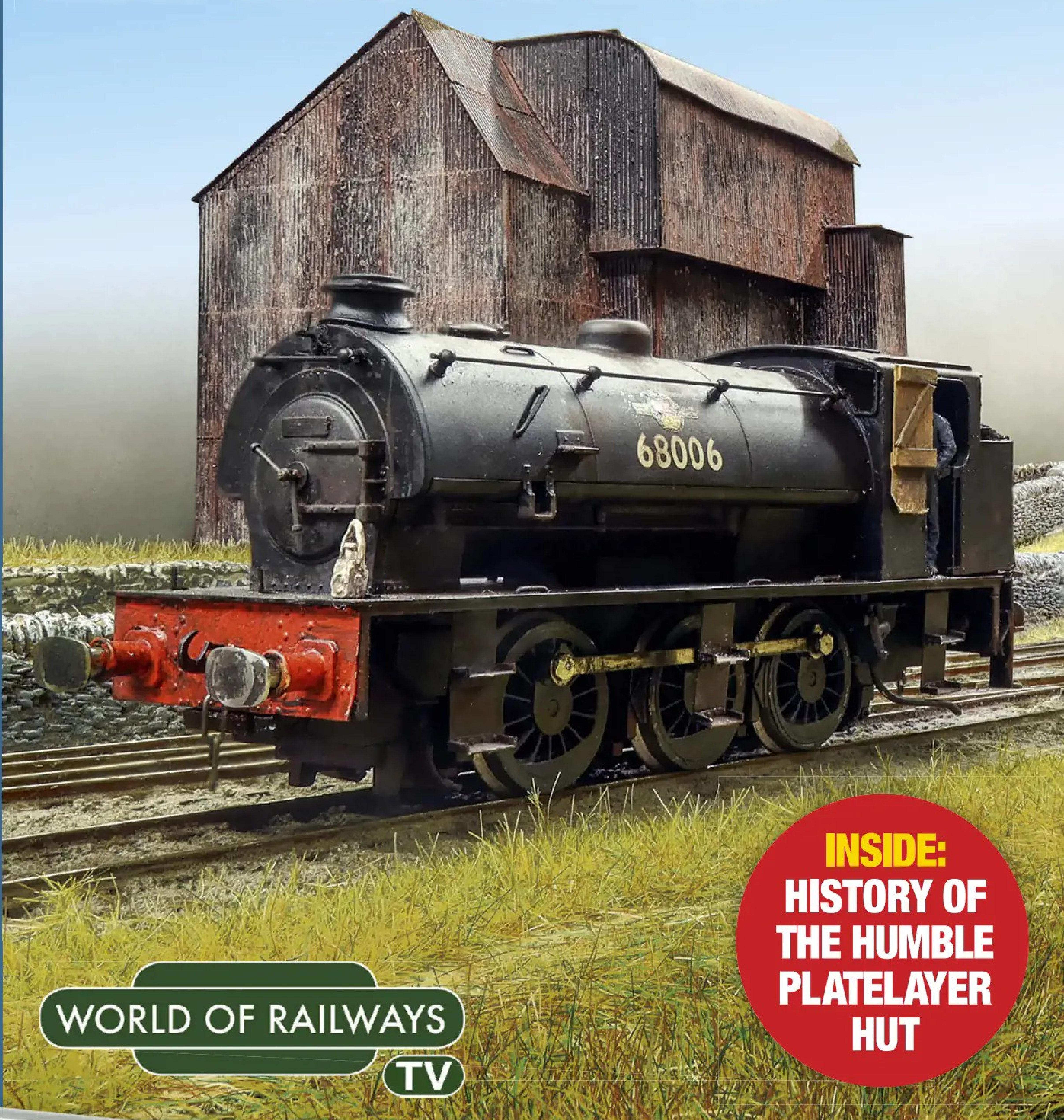

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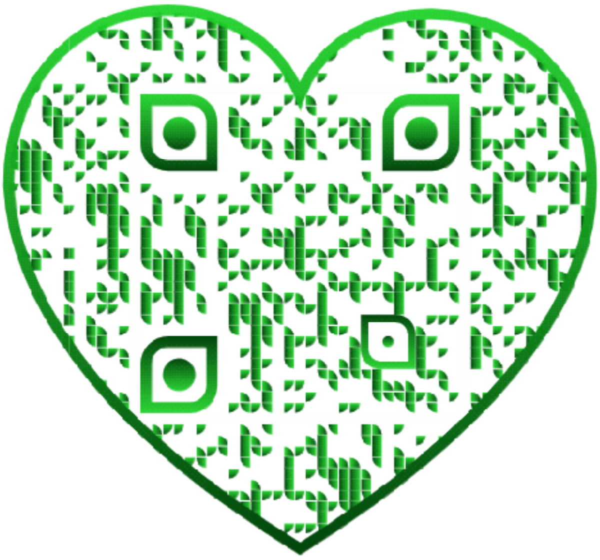

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Life at a traction maintenance depot is always busy, as shown in this layout, which keeps exhibition goers entertained with a variety of traffic coming in for a service.

PLAY

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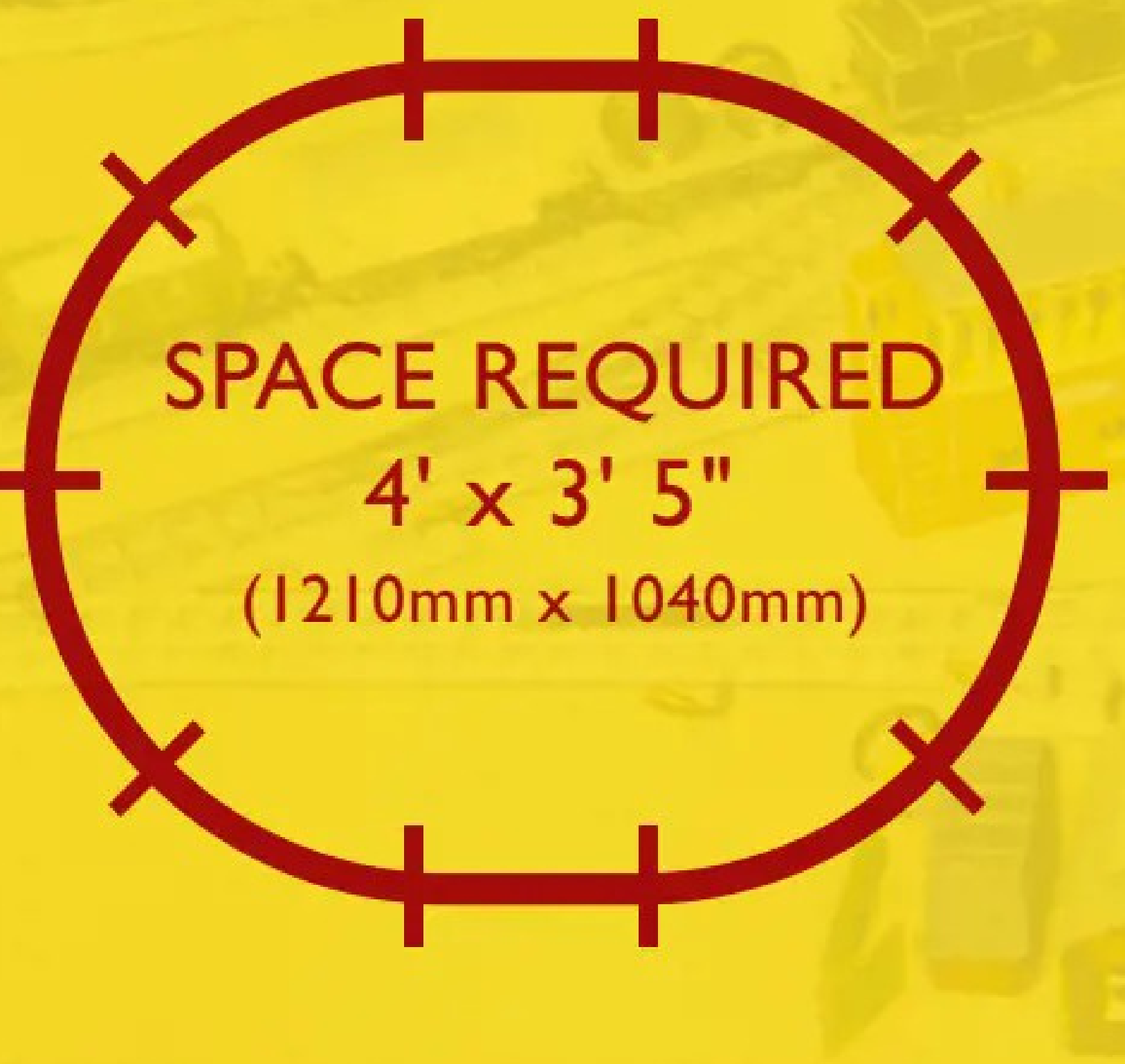
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INSIDE FEBRUARY BRM

GETTING PRACTICAL

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INSPIRING LAYOUTS

p34 Daisy Lane (OO)
This new layout keeps exhibition goers entertained with a variety of traffic coming in for a service.

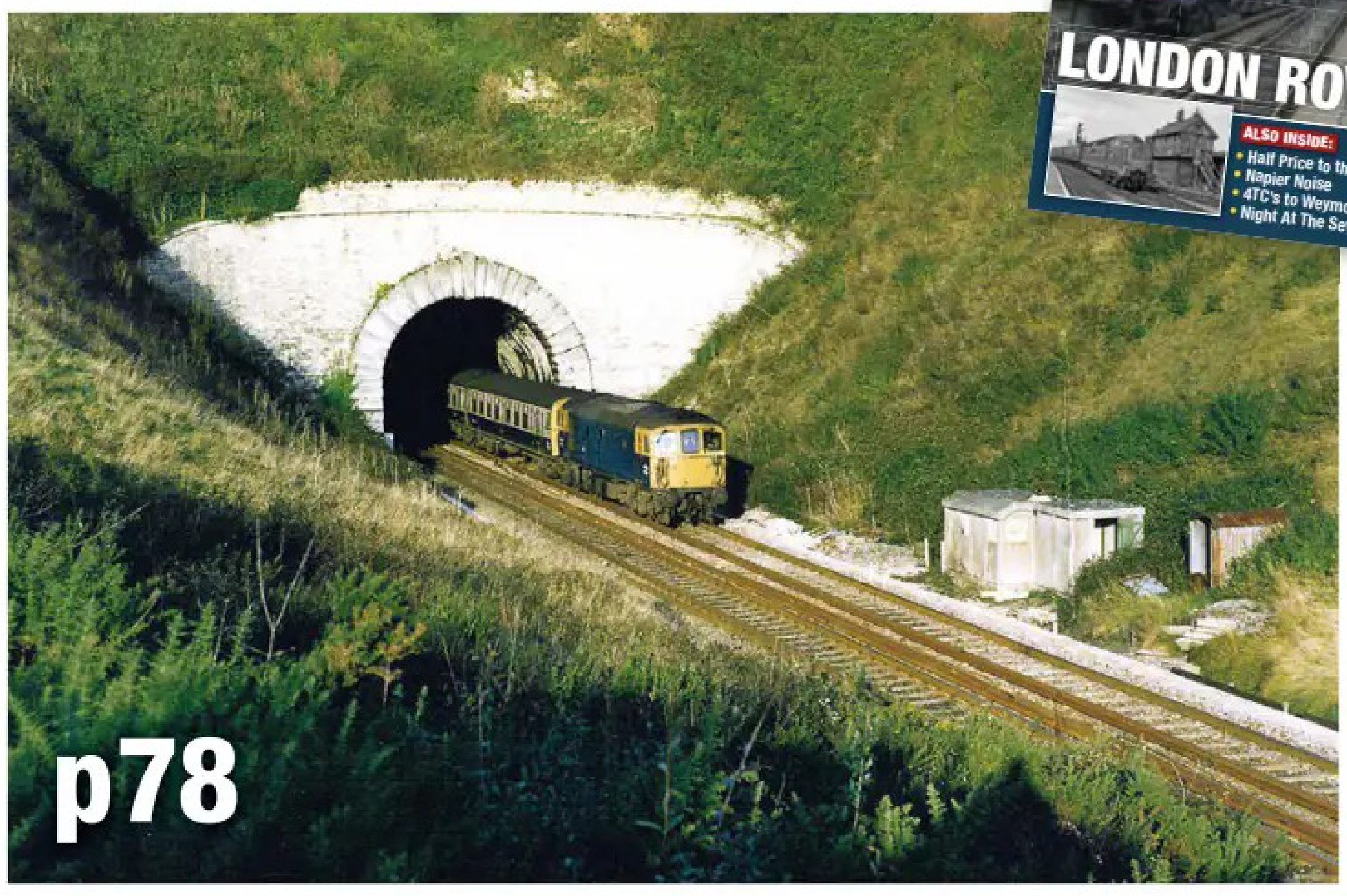
p20 Middleton Top (OO)
Justin Dean's latest creation perfectly recreates the rugged wilderness of our ancient national park.

37 506
Stop
Await instructions

p92 Traeth Hafren (N)
Another excellent micro scene from James Hilton, this time creating a winter scene, which depicts a bitterly cold windswept morning.

A CELEBRATION OF CLASSIC DIESELS & ELECTRICS
TRACTION
LONDON ROVER

TRACTION



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D601

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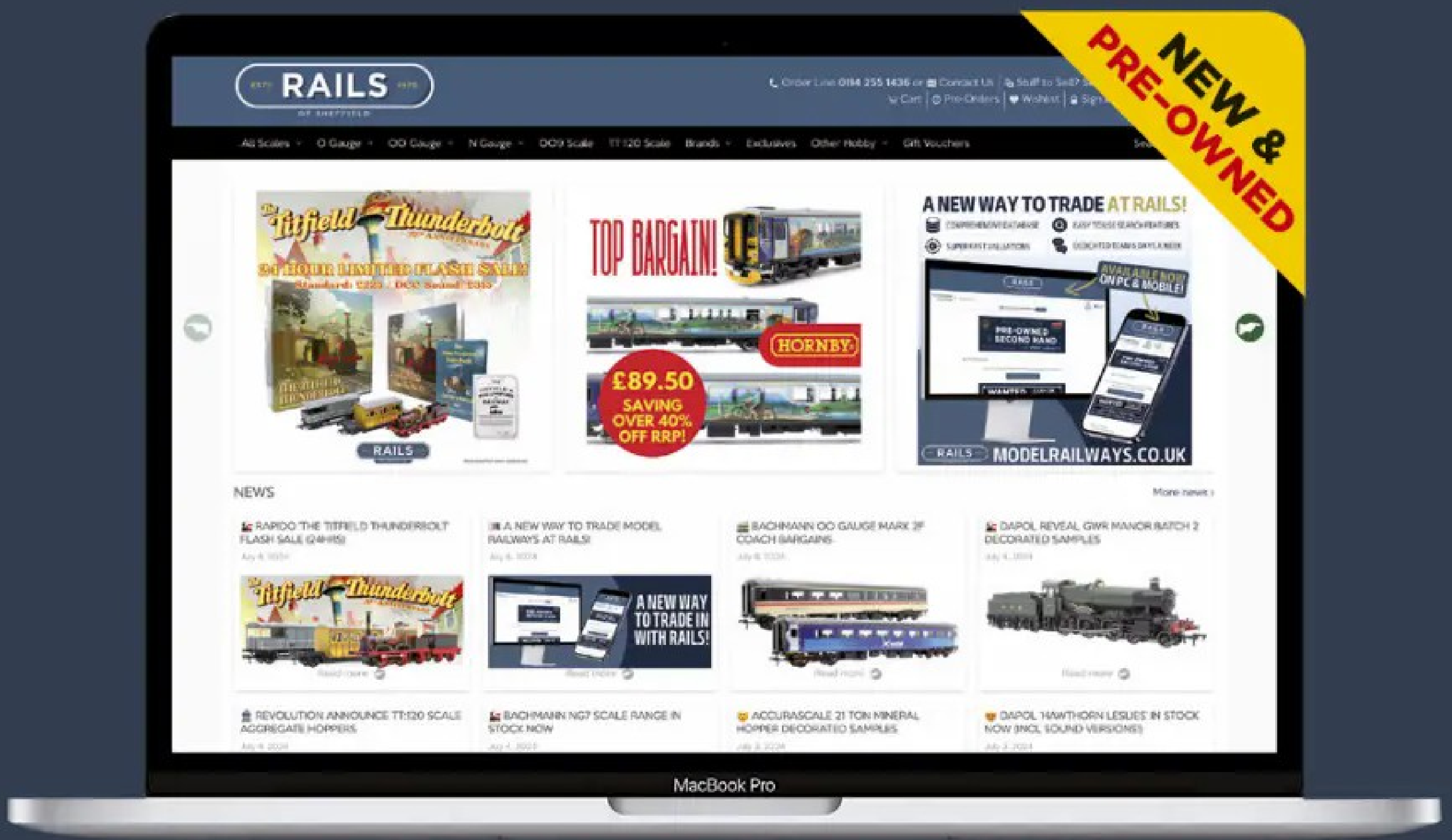

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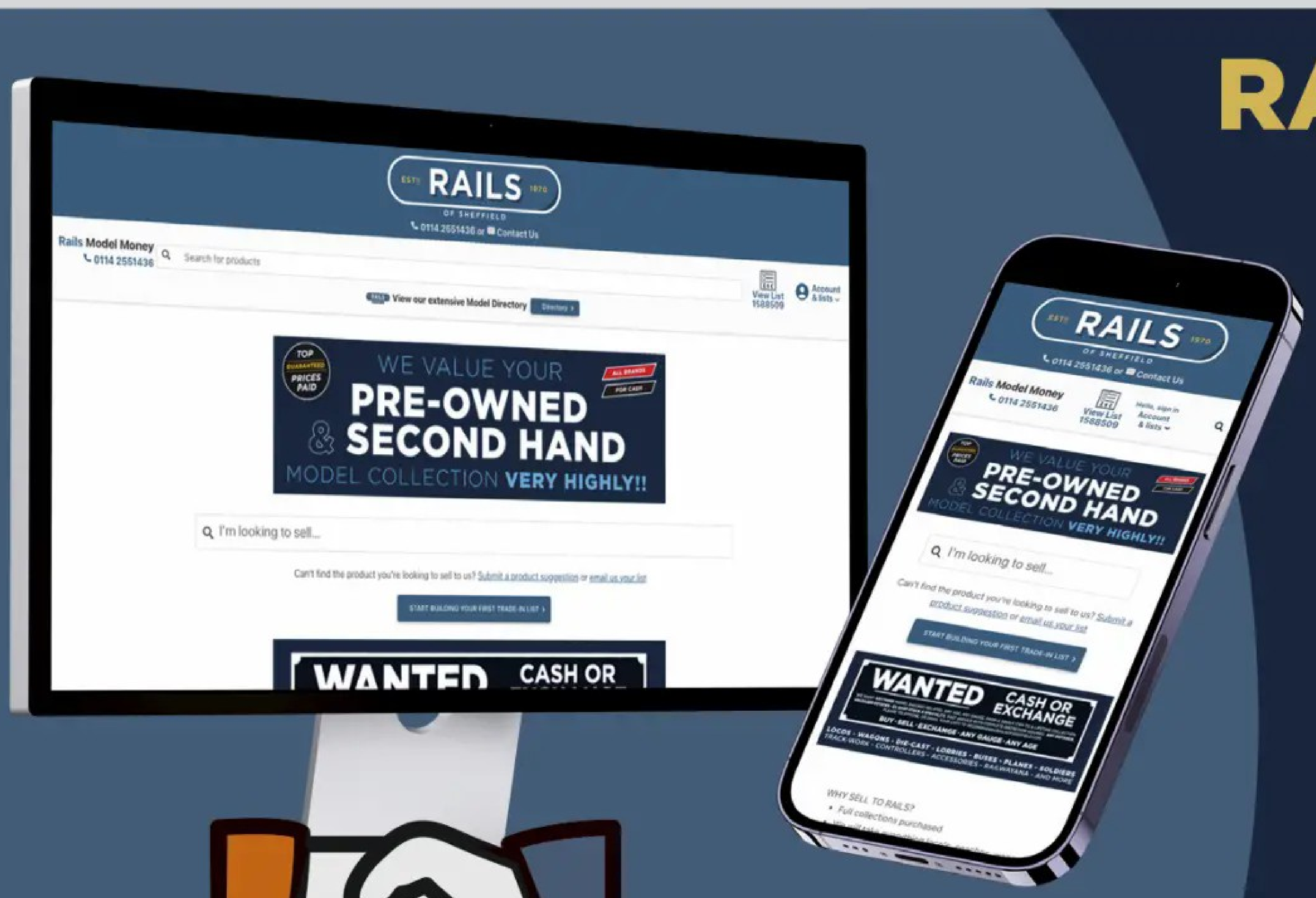

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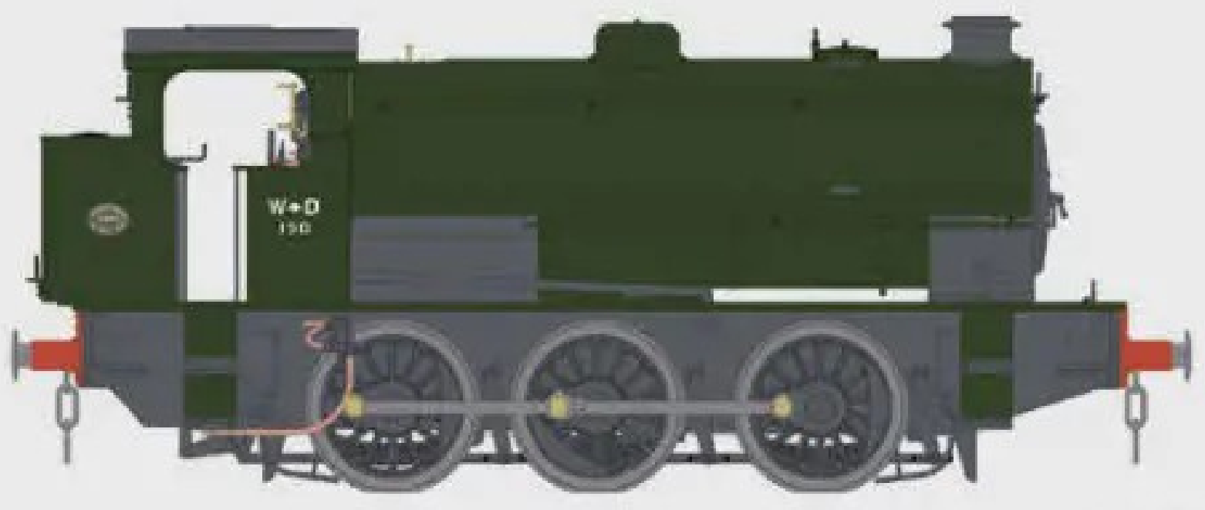

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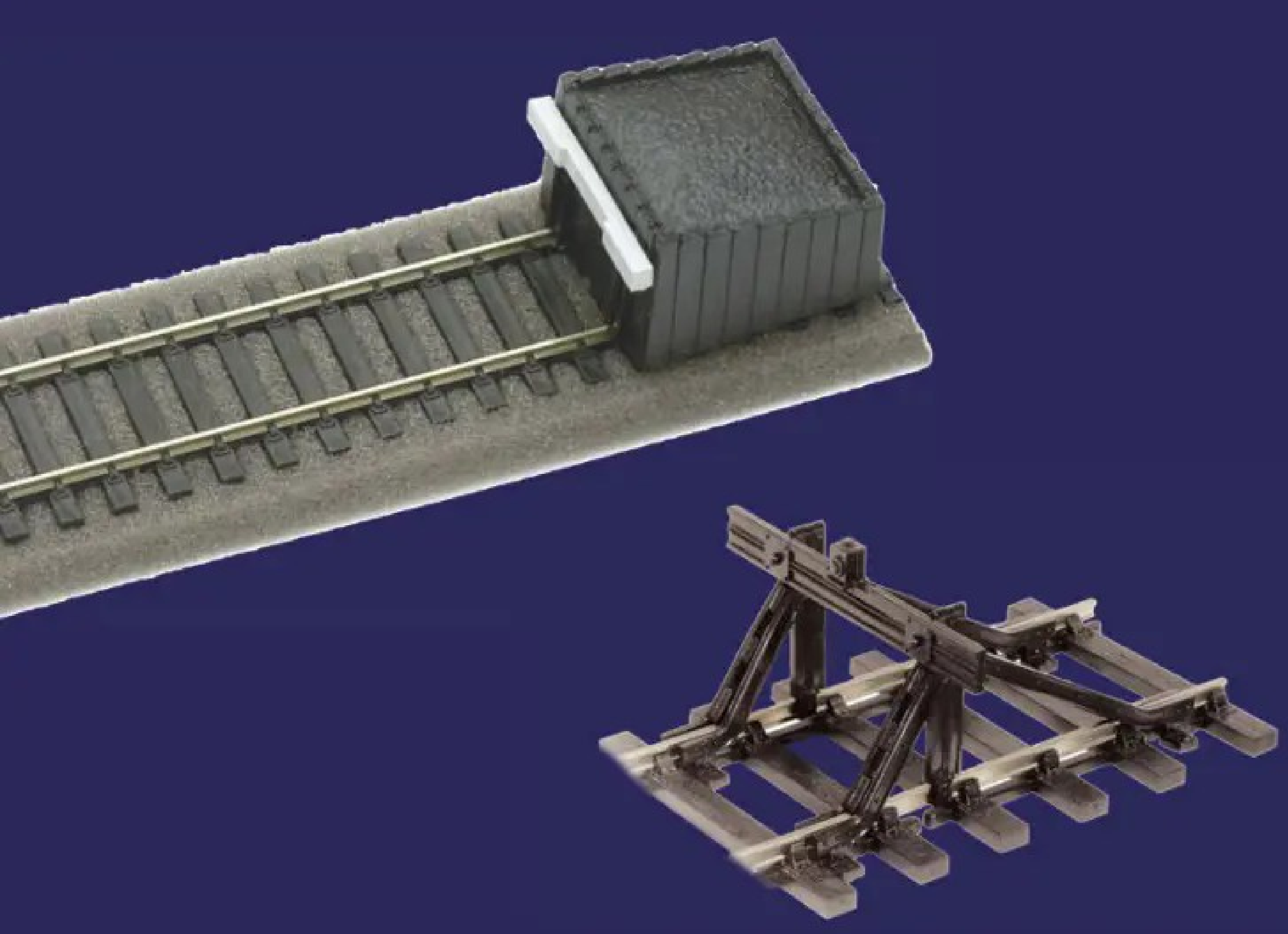

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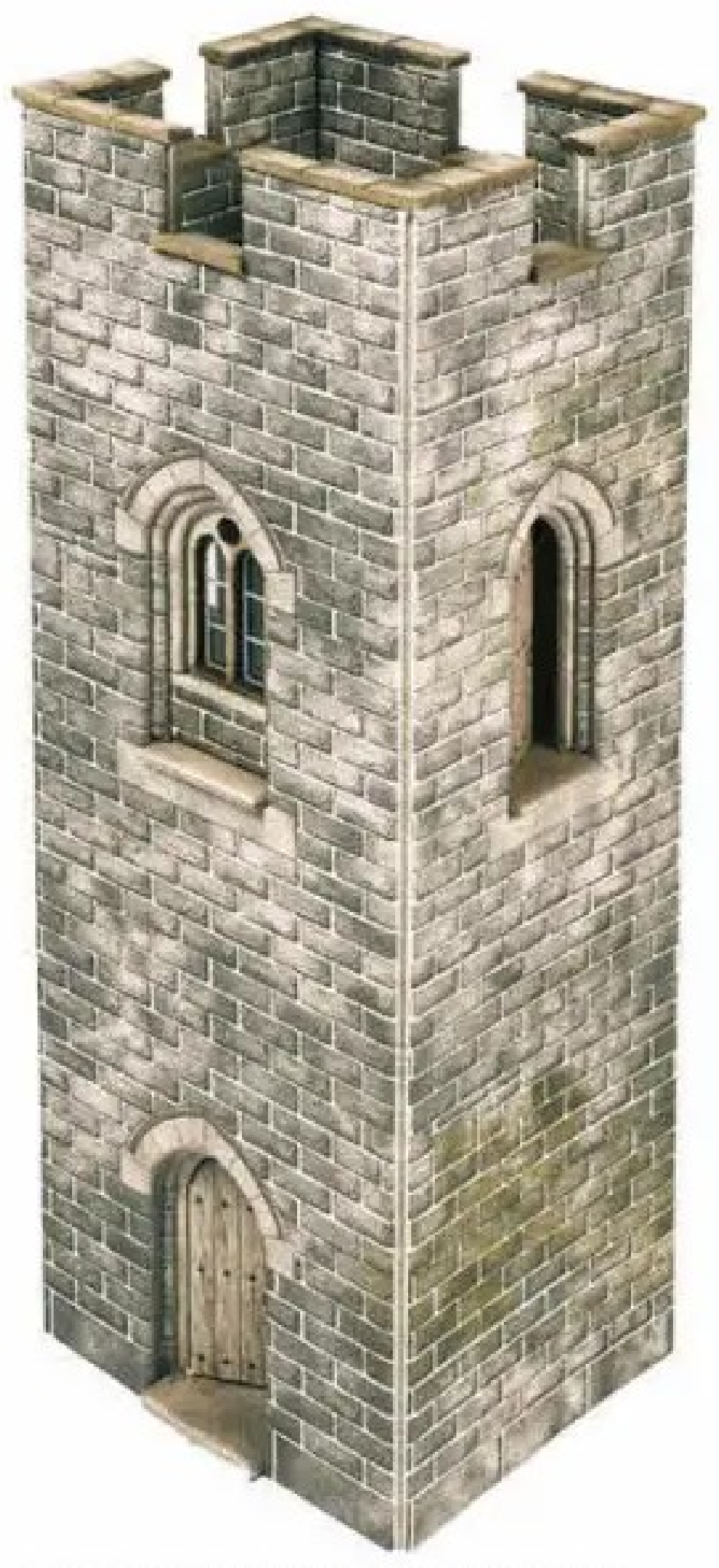

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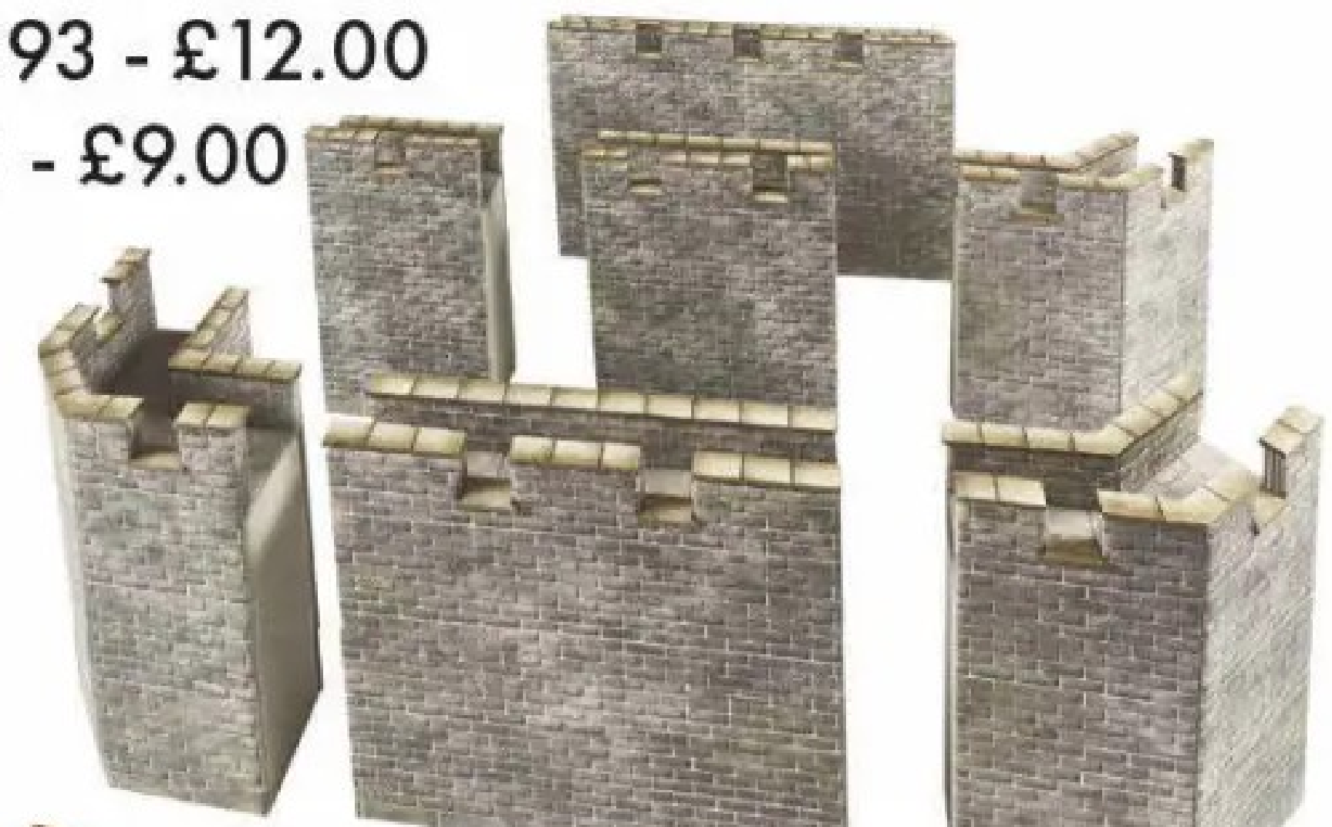

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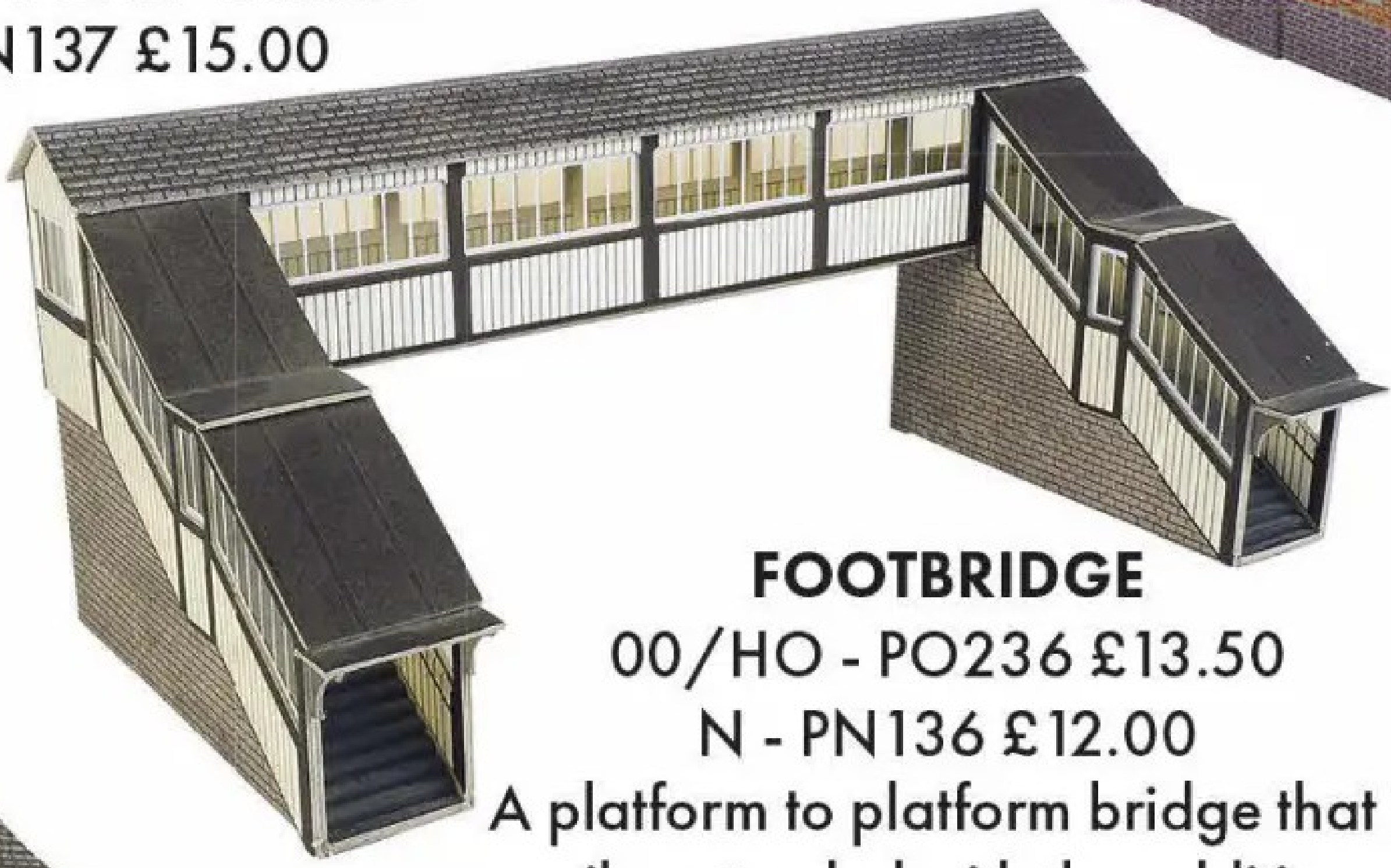

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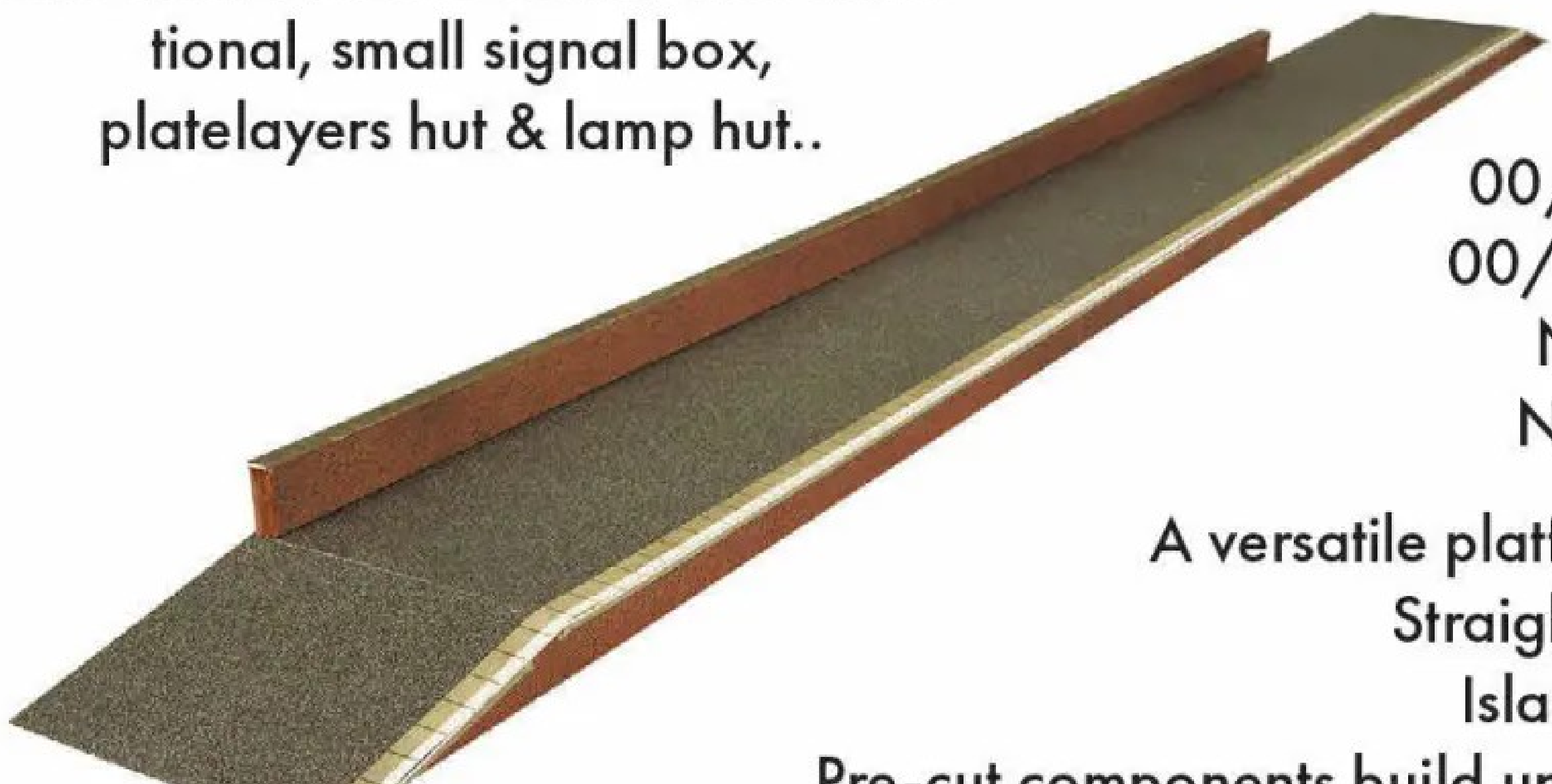

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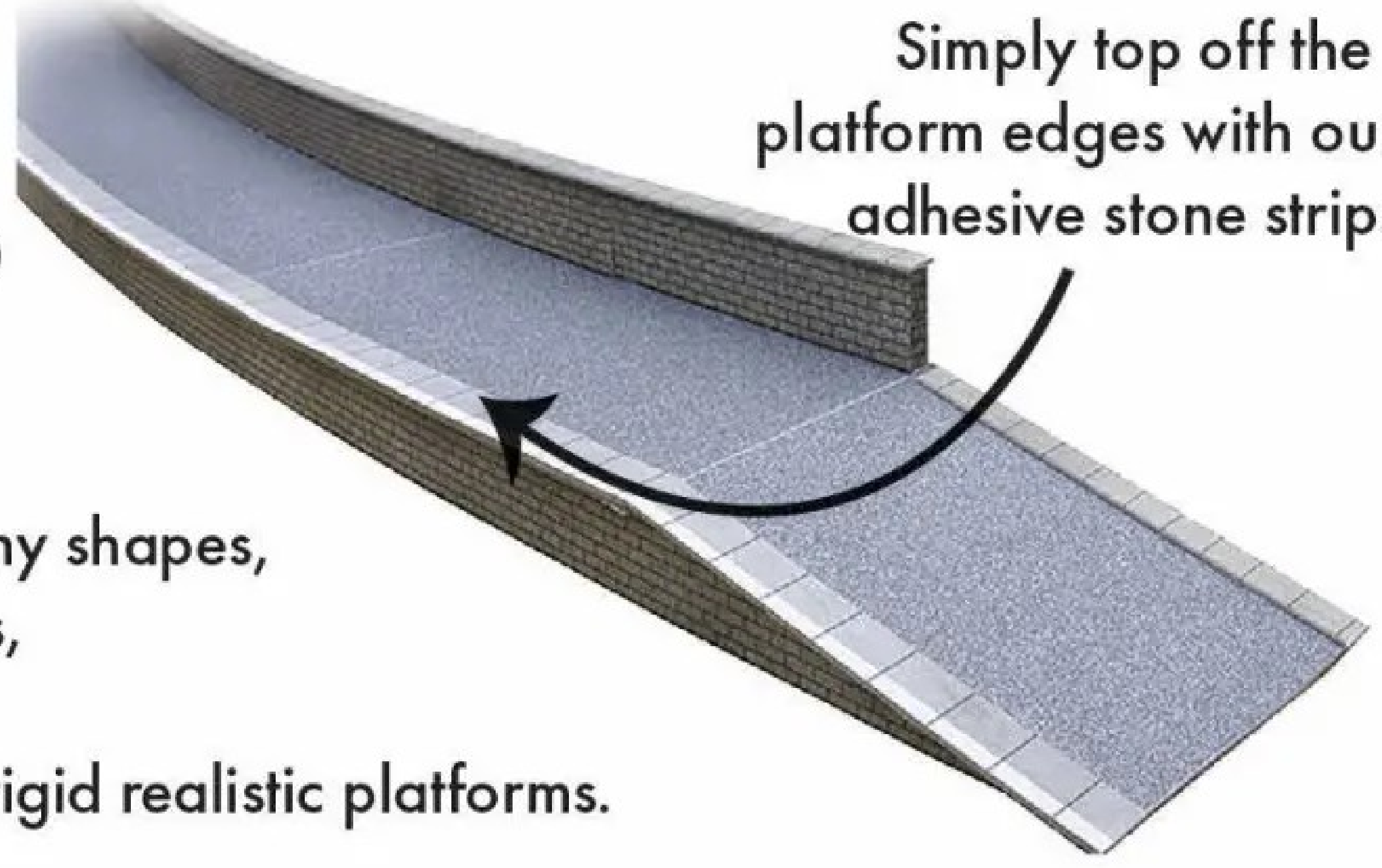

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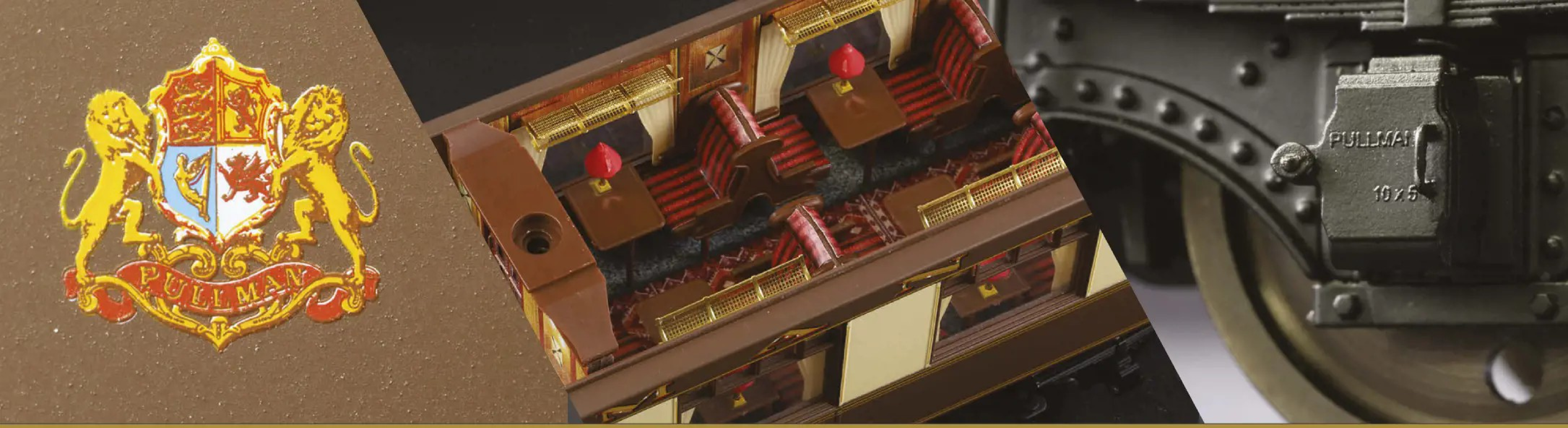

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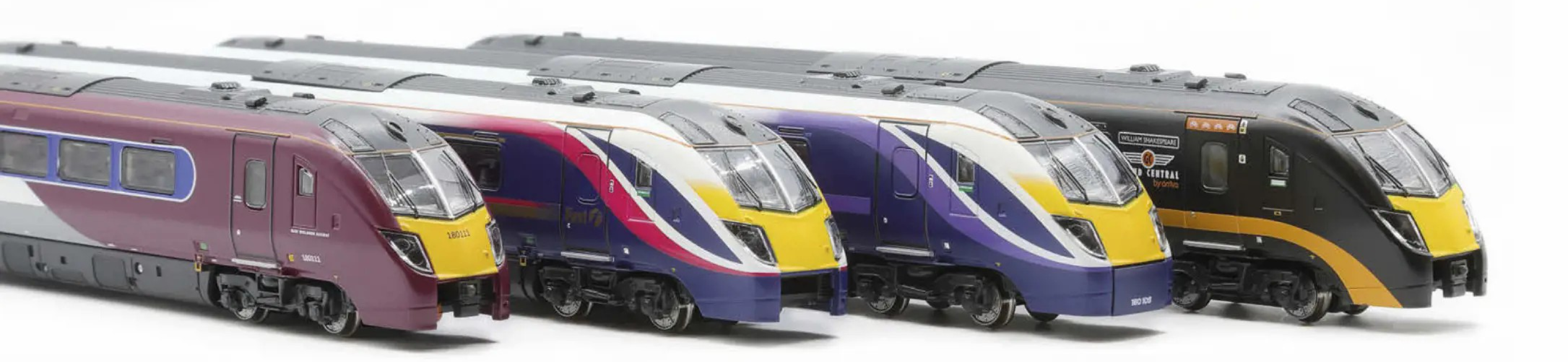

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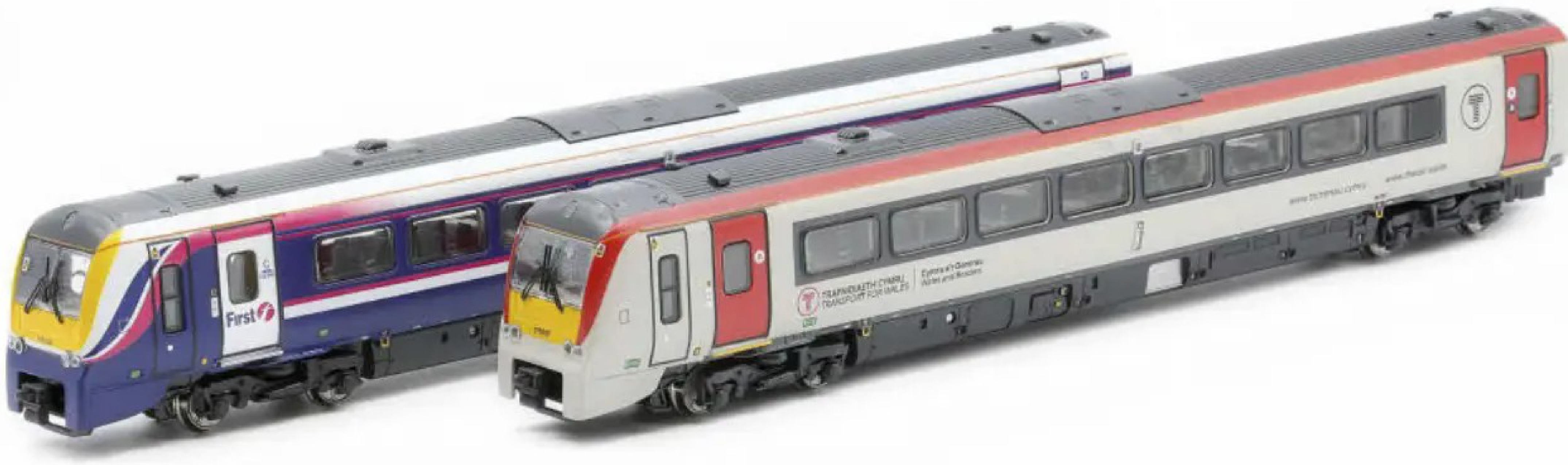

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A J94 locomotive reverses onto its train before heading across the Derbyshire moorland towards Parsley Hay.

HIGH PEAK

Lured back into modelling by his love of the Peak District and the Cromford High Peak, Justin Dean's latest creation recreates the rugged wilderness of our ancient national park.

Words: Justin Dean **Photography:** Andy York

FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Middleton Top – Cromford & High Peak Railway
SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm:1ft/16.5mm/OO
SIZE: 13ft x 4.5ft
ERA/REGION: 1940s-1960s British Railways
LAYOUT TYPE: End to end

PDF MAGAZINES: WWW.XSAVA.XYZ

The Peak District is my favourite place on Earth. I've been fortunate to travel a lot, but there's just something about this place. A rugged, unforgiving, ancient landscape divided up by miles of stone walls, with the occasional hamlet nestling in the safety and shelter of a valley. The folk of the Derbyshire hills have made their mark on this landscape, quarrying stone, mining for lead and making bricks, then, in the 19th century, building a railway connecting these industries, along with the canals at Cromford and Whaley Bridge. The Cromford & High Peak (C&HPR) was one of the earliest railways and, at the time of writing, we're almost at the 200-year anniversary of its creation. Being built in a similar manner to a canal, the line was full of peculiarities, boasting one of the tightest curves and steepest adhesion inclines on the rail network, along with rope-worked inclines operated by stationary steam engines.

A decade ago, I was lucky enough to move to the Peaks. Model railways were a distant memory from a time before university, followed by a career in the music industry and the pressures that came along with that. A move to the countryside was partly to address the work/life balance, and it wasn't long till I discovered the High Peak Trail. When the C&HPR closed at the tail end of the 1960s, Derbyshire Council bought the track

TOP LEFT: Looking up the lane towards the crossing. The walls and field barn are made from DAS air-dry clay, which is either scribed or laid as individual stones.

MIDDLE LEFT: J94 68006, like many of the locomotives used on the C&HPR, had wooden shutters fitted by the drivers over the cab windows to protect them from the weather.

BOTTOM: 68013 is another of the J94s that worked the line. These locos originally had tall coal bunkers, which were cut down, hence the rectangular rear windows rather than the usual circular ones.

> “I had a completely blank canvas to work from. No stock, no materials and barely any suitable tools, so the research began...”

ABOVE: Dapol's model of the J94 has formed the basis of most of 'Middleton Top's' locomotives. These have been detailed using RT Models components, repainted, numbered and weathered; completed by a crew from ModelU.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The C&HPR had its fair share of pre-grouping rolling stock ending their life span on the line. Here, a Furness Railway 10t Brake Van has been 3D-printed by Pre-Grouping Railways.

BOTTOM RIGHT: The engine house is scratch-built from a foam board shell coated in DAS clay, which is scribed when dry. The very distinctive windows are brass etches, other elements are constructed from embossed brick Plastikard.

bed and subsequently turned it into a cycle path, also preserving Cromford Goods and Middleton Top, along with a few other notable sites. Experiencing these places and getting a glimpse into this industrial heritage in the setting of the Peaks was enough to make me think about making a model railway again.

First steps

I had a completely blank canvas to work from. No stock, no materials and barely any suitable tools, so the research began. A significant amount of time was spent (and still is!) scouring the internet for photos of the C&HPR. Fortunately, railway photographers and enthusiasts seem to have found the line fascinating over time and it has been well documented, resulting in some excellent online resources and books. During this research, I also stumbled across RMweb, which has an incredible wealth of knowledge amongst its users, and seeing the work of, and chatting to, Alistair Green, Geraint Hughes and Rob Gunstone, I was given the inspiration and impetus to actually start making a model.

Decisions had to be made. 4mm scale OO gauge was what I was familiar with from my previous endeavours as a teenager, so it seemed the obvious choice to work with. I knew I wanted to make something as realistic as possible so the layout would be based on a real location. I didn't have any thoughts on the layout going to exhibitions, but I did need to move it around the house or pack it down for periods of time, so the scenic part would need to be split into sections, meaning it would need to be fairly light and manageable through doorways.

With these basic design thoughts in mind, I set about 'Middleton Top'. The site of the prototype is on a curve, which was appealing to me as I wanted to move away from a straight end-to-end layout. Boards were constructed from MDF girders; two 12mm thick strips with short sections of softwood sandwiched in between at strategic locations for screwing things in. The ends of the board frameworks are 12mm ply, cut to the contour of the landscape with brass dowels for accurate location, along with bolts and wingnuts to attach each board to the next. 12mm ply was then cut to the shape of the trackbed and attached into the framework. Looking from above, the whole thing forms the shape of a giant banana.

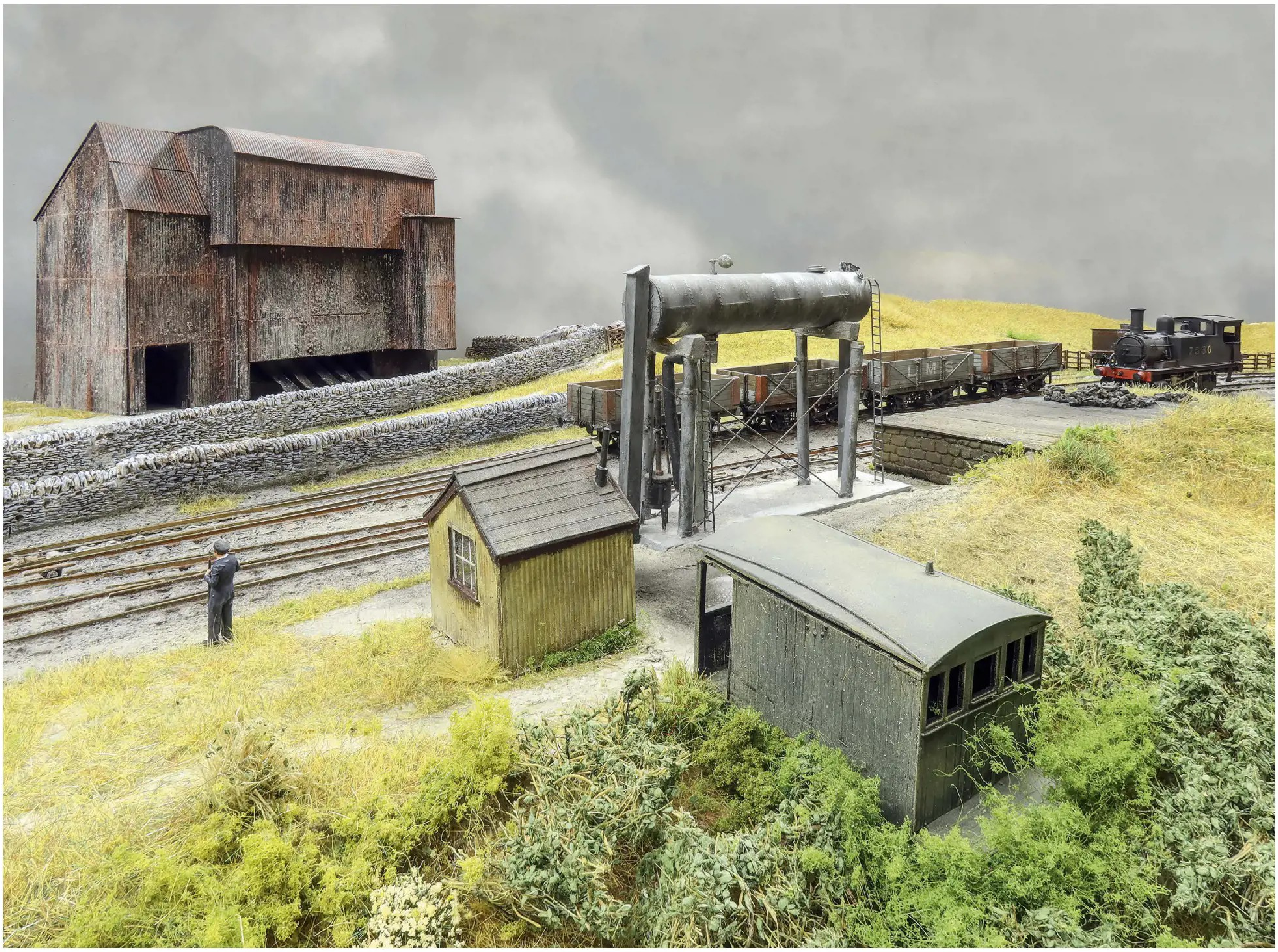
The front of the layout is below the level of this trackbed, and the ground gently rises above at the rear, mimicking the prototype being cut into the hillside. Dense insulation (Kingspan), as used in the building trade, was cut and bedded into the frames, and this was carved to form the landscape around the line. Ordnance Survey maps were then used as reference

LEFT: The lane leading to Middleton Moor had previously been the route of a tramway from Hoptonwood Quarry to the stone crusher siding. This fell out of use in the early part of the 20th century, the only traffic being the occasional farmer with his herd of cows.

MIDDLE LEFT: It may be unsurprising that such a flimsy engine shed didn't fare well! The original burnt down in the early 1900s, along with two LNWR Chopper locomotives, then was rebuilt only to be gradually stripped away by the battering winds of the Derbyshire hills.

> "The site of the prototype is on a curve, which was appealing to me as I wanted to move away from a straight end-to-end layout."

The water tank is thought to be a reused boiler. The model has been formed from brass tube overlaid with Plastikard after punching in rivet patterns.



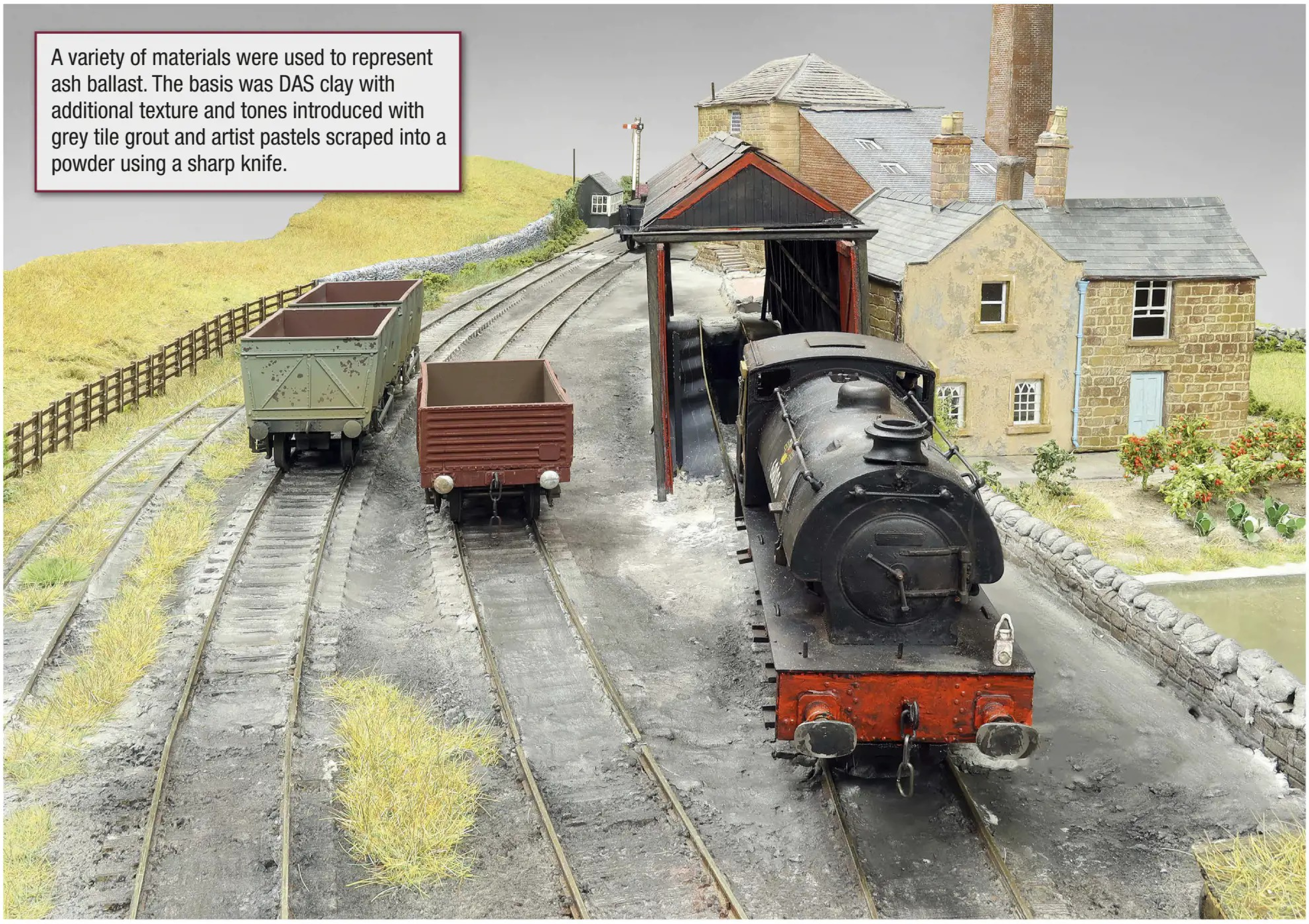
ABOVE: The stores shed was an old Midland Railway brake van represented here by the Slater's kit and starting to get lost in the undergrowth.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Rolling stock is mainly kit-built with a few RTR items, such as these Rapido LMS D. 1666 open wagons, which have been heavily weathered.

BOTTOM RIGHT: J94 68006 eases its way over the crossing that leads to the quarry.

for this, taking care to represent the relationship between man-made features like the reservoirs, the area where the spoil from where these had been dug out had been dumped, the cottage and its garden, and the top of the incline. When I was happy, the whole lot was sealed with PVA glue, followed by a thin Polyfilla layer and a coat of brown acrylic paint.

Peco track was used throughout due to its familiarity and ease of use. I've since learned the C&HPR used bullhead rail, not flat-bottom, so this would definitely be a consideration on any future models! I was keen to try out using DAS air dry clay to represent ash ballast. Initial attempts and experiments had mixed results, and after a while, I settled on using a mix of grey powder tile grout and fine ballast fixed with a very dilute PVA/water mix. The DAS stone colour clay was rolled into flat, approximately 1mm thick sheets using a silicon rolling pin and cut roughly into whatever shape needed, followed by getting pressed into place and being pushed into a thinner layer with fingers over the grout/ballast layer. Before drying, a very stiff bristled brush was used to 'stab' some texture into the clay. For weathering, pastels were scraped with a sharp blade to form powder and applied with a soft brush (make-up brushes are perfect!). Airdry clay has been used to represent stone across the entire layout.



A variety of materials were used to represent ash ballast. The basis was DAS clay with additional texture and tones introduced with grey tile grout and artist pastels scraped into a powder using a sharp knife.

About the modeller

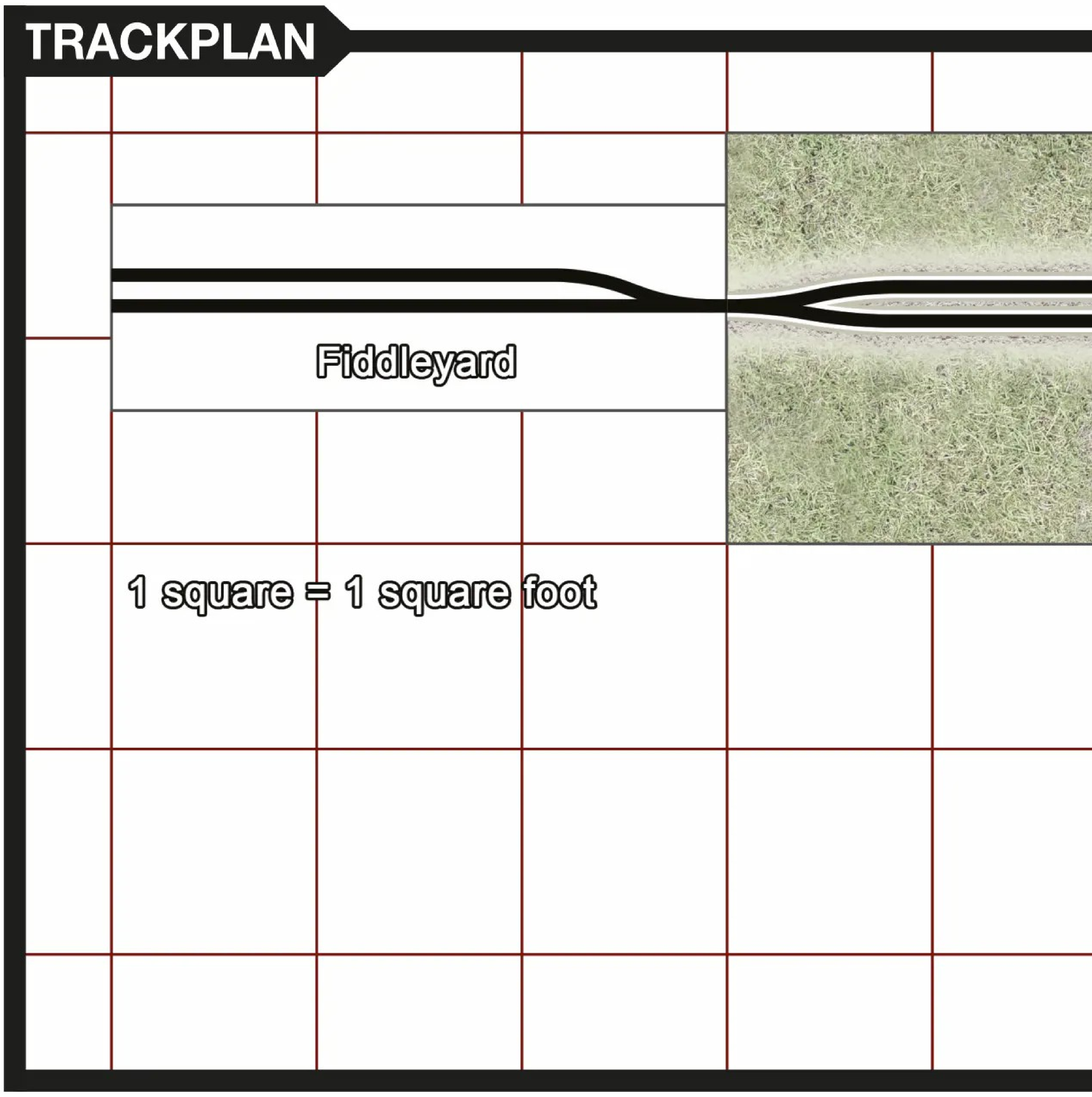
Name: Justin Dean
Age: 51
Years modelling: 10 years, with a big gap in the middle!
Name of first layout: 'Deanchurch'
Favourite era/region: 1950s BR in Derbyshire
Favourite locomotive: NLR Tank

I started out modelling the GWR as a teenager in the late-1980s and created two branch line terminus layouts.

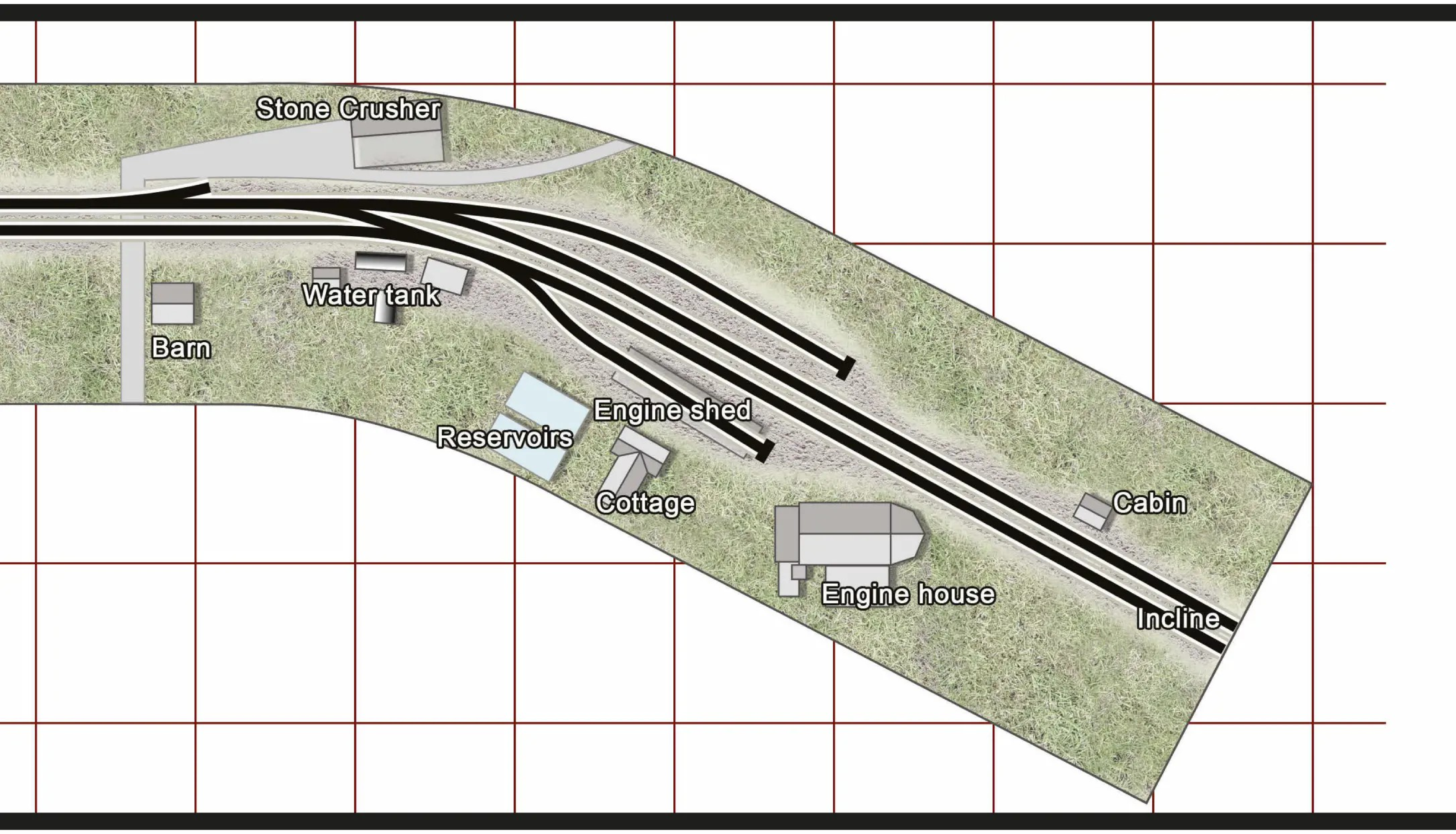
Both were featured in the Railway Modeller and I ended up winning the Junior Modeller Cup and exhibiting at IMREX in London.

Back then, I had been inspired by a visit to Pendon, the *Model Railway Journal* and the collection of Wild Swan books, in particular Barry Norman's book *Landscape Modelling*. The focus has always been on realism and that continues to this day.

I now live in the beautiful town of Wirksworth in Derbyshire, and I'm an active member of the Belper Model Railway Group, who is creating a 7mm scale version of 'Middleton Top'.



Before the J94s arrived, North London Railway Park Tanks worked the Middleton Top to Parsley Hay section. This particular model was constructed from a Mallard kit.



Stone Crusher
Water tank
Barn
Reservoirs
Engine shed
Cottage
Engine house
Cabin
Incline

ABOVE: After the incline closed, longer wheelbase hoppers were sometimes used between Intake Quarry and Parsley Hay. Here, 68013 prepares to run round a short train of Gannets it has just picked up.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The LNWR home signal was positioned at the top of the incline as an indicator it was safe to release the wagons. This model was an amalgamation of Ratio post and MSE etched parts.

BOTTOM RIGHT: A J94 simmers on what used to be the Stanton Iron Ore Co. siding. The loading dock went out of use some years ago, but the siding remained in use, often for storing condemned wagons in later years.

Scenic touches

All buildings were scratch-built from a 5mm foamcore board shell, and stonework represented by 1mm sheets of DAS glued on with PVA as described for the trackwork. When dry, I gently sanded to create a very flat surface and sharp corners, then stone courses were marked in pencil and finished with an engineers' scribe. Windows in the engine house and engine shed were made from etched brass and were kindly supplied by Geraint. A good proportion of the drystone walls were also made from DAS clay and are individually-laid stones. There are a few sections of moulded walling, used but these will get replaced over time; when I have the patience!

It was really important to me that the railway sits inside the surrounding countryside, and this meant representing some very large expanses of grass. Fortunately, one of the developments while I've been away from modelling has been static grass. My approach is to use it as a 3D painter's palette; with different lengths, tones and colours available, it's possible to create immense variation. For each area or field, I created a mix for a base layer of two or three different grasses. Once set, a layering spray was used, followed by a 'top coat' of grass, usually of one type, to unify the area. Glues, grasses and applicator have all been from WWS and it's an aspect of the layout I'm particularly pleased with.

TOP RIGHT:
Looking down the line towards 'Middleton Top', we can see the huddle of buildings perched on the hillside. Winter would have been a challenging time up here!

MIDDLE RIGHT:
The stone crusher lurks in the background; the massive corrugated tin structure seems omnipresent in photos of the real location.

BOTTOM:
This epitomises the C&HPR for me. An NLR tank peering over a dry stone wall hauling 4-wheel tenders and open wagons. These small LNWR tenders carried water for some of the remote hamlets along with the watering facility at Longcliffe.

Rolling stock

Middleton Top changed very little over the years which gives the opportunity to run stock from a variety of time periods. During the early part of the 20th century, the LNWR Chopper 2-4-0T dominated. These were followed by the NLR tanks and finally J94 0-6-0STs. I have chosen to focus on the post-war era and so far have built an NLR class 75 (with more on the way) and have a number of Dapol J94s, which have been detailed with components from RT Models and completed with ModelU crew. Another feature of the C&HPR was the continued use of pre-grouping vehicles throughout its lifespan.

Modified LNWR 4-wheel tenders were used to carry water for both supplying locomotives and some of the remote hamlets. These have been represented by a number of 3D-printed examples I commissioned and run alongside a plethora of kit-built and RTR open wagons and hoppers. With 'Middleton Top' being perched at the top of one of the inclines, the focus of operation is shunting. Wagons were often sent up and down the incline in pairs, one set helping to counterbalance the other while the Butterley steam engine housed at the top kept the rope running. This is the part of the layout that will be the next phase of its development; a working model incline in the form of an extra board, a line to attach wagons and a means to propel.

At four years into building this model, there's still plenty more to do! I'm also itching to build another project, which is in planning stage…C&HPR of course. ■

> "It was really important to me that the railway sits inside the surrounding countryside, and this meant representing some very large expanses of grass."

COMMUNITY

EDITOR'S COMMENT

New year, new challenge.

That is how a lot of us kick start our January. And what better way to begin 2025 than building a new layout? Model railways come in all shapes and sizes and if you are not feeling confident enough to tackle a big continuous run, a micro layout can be just as satisfying and challenging to produce.

Few in the hobby prove this better than James Hilton, who has shared with us his latest creation, 'Traeth Hafren', which became the ideal opportunity for him to test out some winter modelling skills, and to great effect may we add too – read more on page 92. That's the thing with railway modelling as a hobby, there's always something new to learn, whether that be a technique, a new technology, or a new gauge or era. Our latest office project, the NG7 layout (we've yet to name it), is starting to take shape now, with the bridge construction being the area of focus in this issue (page 51). Next month, we will be concentrating on the scenery, and then it'll pretty much be job complete. Look out for the finished layout on our stand at any of the Warners shows in 2025.

Speaking of shows, our Doncaster exhibition is not too far away, and you can read all about why you need to get yourself a ticket on page 106.

The first step for many on the journey to building a new layout is coming up with a trackplan, and the good news is that BRM is here to help on that front. Alongside our next issue (Spring), we will be offering newsstand readers a trackplan supplement, which will include lots of examples, plus tips on how to get started, so make sure you look out for that.

As always, we love to hear from readers about their latest projects, so please get in touch and share progress with us at **brm@warnersgroup.co.uk**

Happy Modelling
Debbie Wood

WEEKEND PLANS...

Thamesmead Model Railway Exhibition
Organised by the Erith Model Railway Society at the Harris Garrard Academy, DA18 4DW, this two-day show features a wide selection of layouts and trade support alongside demonstrations and society stands. Adult tickets cost £9 and £1 for children over the age of 5.
DATE: January 25-26th, 2025

The Festival of British Railway Modelling
Back at the Doncaster Racecourse, the popular exhibition returns. This year promises to be bigger and better than ever, with over 30 layouts in attendance across a variety of gauges and over 60 traders and societies to grab a bargain from – for more visit www.rmweb.co.uk/shows/doncaster.
DATE: February 8-9th, 2025

Tonbridge Model Railway Exhibition
Held at the Angel Centre, TN9 1SF, the 2025 show will feature 20+ layouts across 0, 00, EM, P4, 016.5, N and 2mm scales, plus a variety of traders, including Rapido Trains. Adult entry starts at £8, with children under 10 getting free entry.
DATE: February 15th, 2025

Model Rail Scotland
Scotland's big show of the year returns in 2025 to the Scottish Event Campus in Glasgow. The three-day event showcases a wide range of exciting layouts, plus trade and societies to satisfy all different types of railway modellers.
DATE: February 21-23rd, 2025

Tenterden Model Railway Exhibition
Hosted at Homewood School, TN30 6LT, the Tenterden Model Railway Exhibition is spread across two halls and includes numerous layouts and trade stands. Free parking and refreshments are available, with entry costing £6 for adults and £3 for children (under 5s go free).
DATE: February 22-23rd, 2025

GRAND RE-OPENING

Pendon Museum will close over the Christmas break to repair and recuperate (excluding 30 - 31st of December and Jan 1st, when we will open from 11am-4pm as usual) and will re-open fully on Feb 1st, 2025. To celebrate our re-opening, we will have a special exhibition of two visiting layouts for that weekend only (1-2nd February 2025). On display will be Nick Wood's 'Much Murkle' and Paul Rhodes' 'Old Parrock' layouts, both fantastic examples of the railway modelling hobby.

Nick Wood's GWR 'Much Murkle' layout is a fictitious 1930s' community in Herefordshire with a mix of scratch-built and kit-built content, all heavily modified and weathered with incredible detailing. Paul Rhodes' 'Old Parrock' represents a small halt and coal yard on a fictitious railway line at the northern edge of Ashdown Forest, East Sussex, and is set in the pre-grouping era when trains from both the LBSCR and SECR may be seen.

There is no additional cost for this exhibition and no need to book admission in advance. The museum will be open from the usual time of 11am, with last entry at 3.15pm.

OLD ENGLISH

Firstly, thank you for the excellent exhibition at the NEC.

Secondly, in the Community section of the most recent BRM magazine, your team needn't have apologised to Adrian Willats for your 'Americanisation' in using the word 'gotten'. It is an old English word that goes back many hundreds of years and has simply fallen out of favour in the UK. It is still used by the British in the phrase 'ill-gotten gains'. The British are quick to condemn many American-sounding words as proof of Americans ruining the English language when, in fact, they're preserving it. So, BRM is only guilty of doing the same.

But taking a leaf out of Adrian's book, I do object to the increasing use in Britain of the term 'train station' instead of 'railway station', which, I fear, does come from the US.

Thank you for an excellent magazine.

Nick Trudgian

BUILDING WITH FRIENDS

The story starts in 2017, when, after some health issues, I thought I would fulfil a lifelong dream and construct a model railway.

It soon became clear that I would need to expand my very inexperienced and inadequate skills and knowledge, so I was fortunate to join the Thistle Modelmakers Model Railway Club, which meets weekly at Dalkeith on the outskirts of Edinburgh, where I was made very welcome and soon made many friends.

After moving house in September 2020, I decided to order a new railway shed in the guise of a garage. After a few weeks, one Friday, I had been dispatched to the local High Street to do some shopping, and lo and behold, who should I bump into but two members and one ex-member of the Thistle Club going for their regular Friday lunch at a local restaurant whereupon I was invited to join them and it became a regular event.

The conversations were always lively and broad-ranging, but we always arrived back at railways. During one of these meets, I was asked what I would like to model, which I said it would be of my local station Dunbar circa 1930s, for which I had an original trackplan. Unfortunately, when it was transferred to AnyRail in OO, I would have needed a much larger shed as I wanted to run prototypical-length trains. The following week, to my great surprise and delight, the three friends (the well-known John Bowman, Donald MacDonald and Robin Renton) offered to help build what would be a freelance 1930s LNER-themed layout, though it would soon become apparent that I was the help.

Finally, after much delay (lockdowns, etc.), the shed finally arrived in 2022, whereupon work began initially on Thursdays and Fridays. Then, once the track was laid and tested and some of the infrastructure was in place (consuming copious amounts of cake, scones, and gallons of tea), it was decided to revert to Fridays, but always with cake.

The layout consists of a continuous up and down main line, a station (Pop-Up designs of Cupar in Fife), a 21-bay Roundhouse with Fleischmann turntable, a Brewery, a Maltings, a three-track carriage shed made by John from five Pop-Up kits, a limestone mine also made by John and a coal yard, my late Father-in-law was a local coal merchant.

Inspired by St Margarets Shed, which was in Edinburgh, there is no fiddle yard but the main line runs through both the carriage and goods sidings. We have basic working semaphore signals (Dapol) and two (working) colour light gantries by John and Donald. The points all work with solenoid motors mounted on units made by John on his 3D printer (all 56 of them).

All the underboard wiring, signals, buffer lamps, street, yard lamps, buildings and some of the carriages all work due to the expertise of Donald and finally, but by no means least, there's Robin with all the trees, vegetation and other associated tasks.

I have a fairly good selection of carriages and goods wagons, and I am still adding to them with a view to running prototypical-length trains.

I hope that you have enjoyed my resume of the layout, which was never intended for exhibition but rather somewhere like-minded people can relax and enjoy our wonderful hobby.

Lloyd Togneri

SEARCH FOR UK'S BEST YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHERS

New prizes are up for grabs in the search for the UK's most promising young railway photographers.

FUJIFILM UK has been announced as a co-sponsor of the Young Railway Photographer of the Year competition, organised by the National Railway Museum and the Railway Photographic Society.

Three Fujifilm X-T5 Silver digital cameras with XF16-50mm lenses have now been added to the prize pot for the overall winner and winners in the two age categories; 18 and under and 19-25. Other prizes include a tour on Network Rail's New Measurement Train, a GB Railfreight cab simulator experience, heritage railway line tickets, and more.

Shortlisted entries will be displayed in exhibitions at the National Railway Museum in York and Locomotion in Shildon as part of the celebrations for Railway 200, the bicentenary of the modern railway, in 2025.

To enter, young photographers are invited to submit a portfolio of six photographs around the theme of Railway 200. Images may include, but are not limited to, railway and carriage design, architecture and structures, travel experiences, railway landscapes, or innovation and ingenuity.

The competition is open to entrants of all photographic abilities, whether amateur or professional. Any devices capable of photography are permitted to be used, including smartphones.

The competition is running for the second time, with the previous winners announced in 2022. Entries ranged from impressive station architecture to historic steam engines and dramatic railway landscapes. The youngest entrant was just eight years old.

For more details and to enter, head to **www.youngrailphotographeroftheyear.co.uk.**

HOPETOWN DARLINGTON WINS VISITOR ECONOMY AWARD

Hopetown Darlington has won the Visitor Economy Award at the County Durham Together Awards 2024.

The ceremony, held at Hardwick Hall, comes after winning the North East Culture Award for Best Museum or Cultural Venue 2024 and hot on the heels of the Welcome accolade and Quality Assessed Visitor Attraction accolade awarded by VisitEngland.

The Visitor Economy Award recognises an individual, organisation, or business that plays a vital role in promoting the county as a safe and great place to visit, supporting the hospitality and tourism sector, and to help visitor economy.

Other nominees in the Visitor Economy Award category included Bowes Museum and Weardale Railway.

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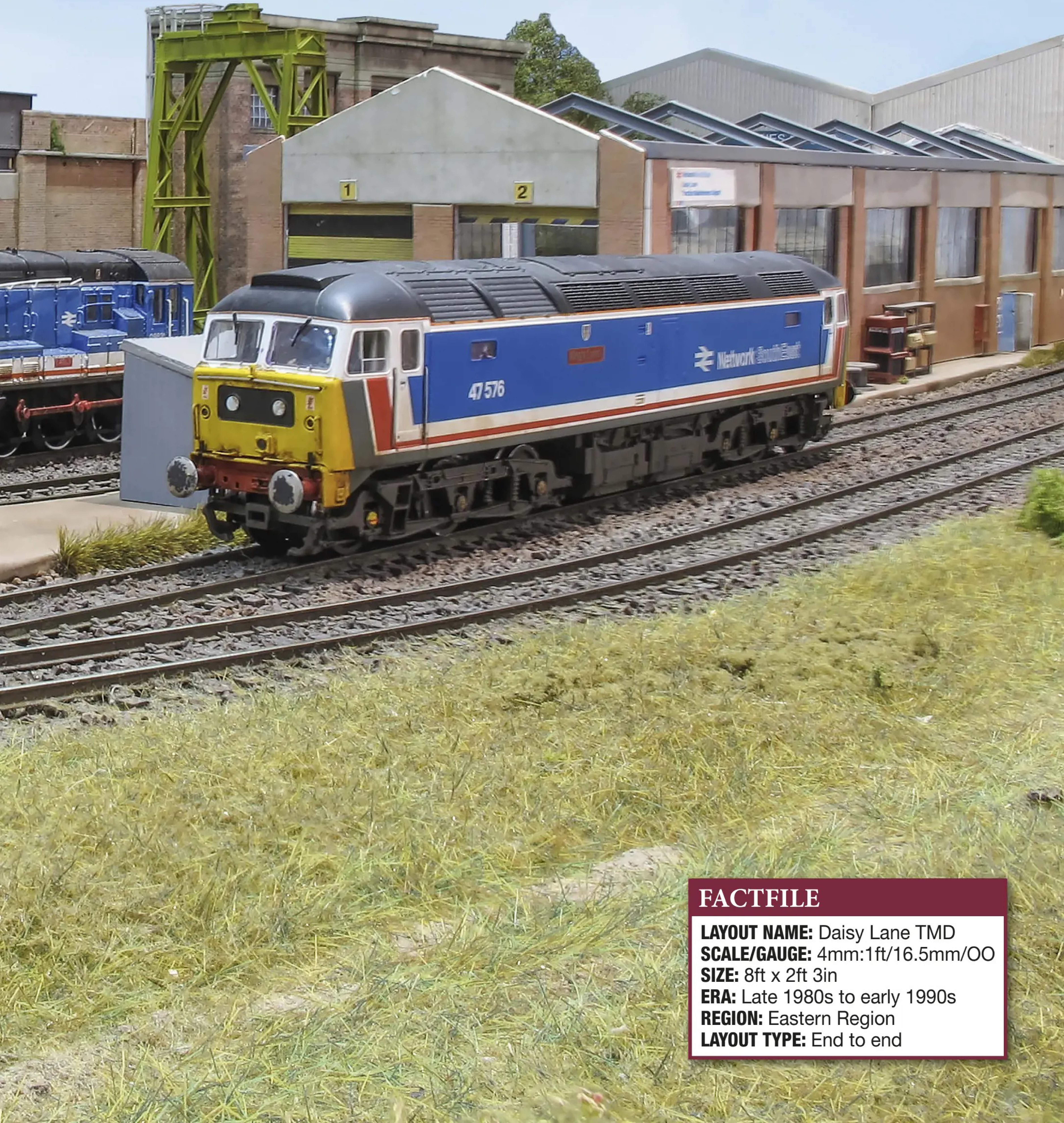
50 028
Network SouthEast

Network SouthEast livery lives on in this picture as a Class 47 and 08 are stabled on Daisy Lane TMD with a Class 50 arriving for servicing.

DAISY LANE

Life at a traction maintenance depot is always busy, as shown in this layout, which comes abounding with detail and keeps exhibition goers entertained with a variety of traffic coming in for a service.

Words: Simon Lemmon **Photography:** Phil Parker



FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Daisy Lane TMD
SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm:1ft/16.5mm/OO
SIZE: 8ft x 2ft 3in
ERA: Late 1980s to early 1990s
REGION: Eastern Region
LAYOUT TYPE: End to end

'Daisy Lane TMD' is based around the late-1980s to early-1990s, which is an era that, as a young lad, I spent many a happy hour around railway depots and stations enjoying the variety in traction and liveries and at that time, it was a situation that you never knew what was going to turn up. It could be a locally-based loco or a stranger from maybe Eastfield or Bristol Bath Road, which made it all the more interesting. At that time, some depots also spent the time embellishing their own locos, for example, Stratford tended to paint its Class 47 roofs grey and add a cockney sparrow logo on the side; Eastfield, meanwhile, added a Scotty dog logo and several locos were named with large red-backed nameplates for the local area that they were allocated, too.

The idea of 'Daisy Lane TMD' came about when located at our previous home, the idea of moving was suggested. At that time, I had a permanent large layout and I was suddenly in the situation of either continuing to work on the layout knowing that at some point I would have to break it up, or break it up now and create a small modular layout that could be relocated. After careful consideration, the idea of 'Daisy Lane TMD' was born. From the start, it had to be of a modular construction and of a size that would be easy to transport in a car. I also wanted to make sure that it was designed with a certain amount of non-railway elements included to make the end result believable.

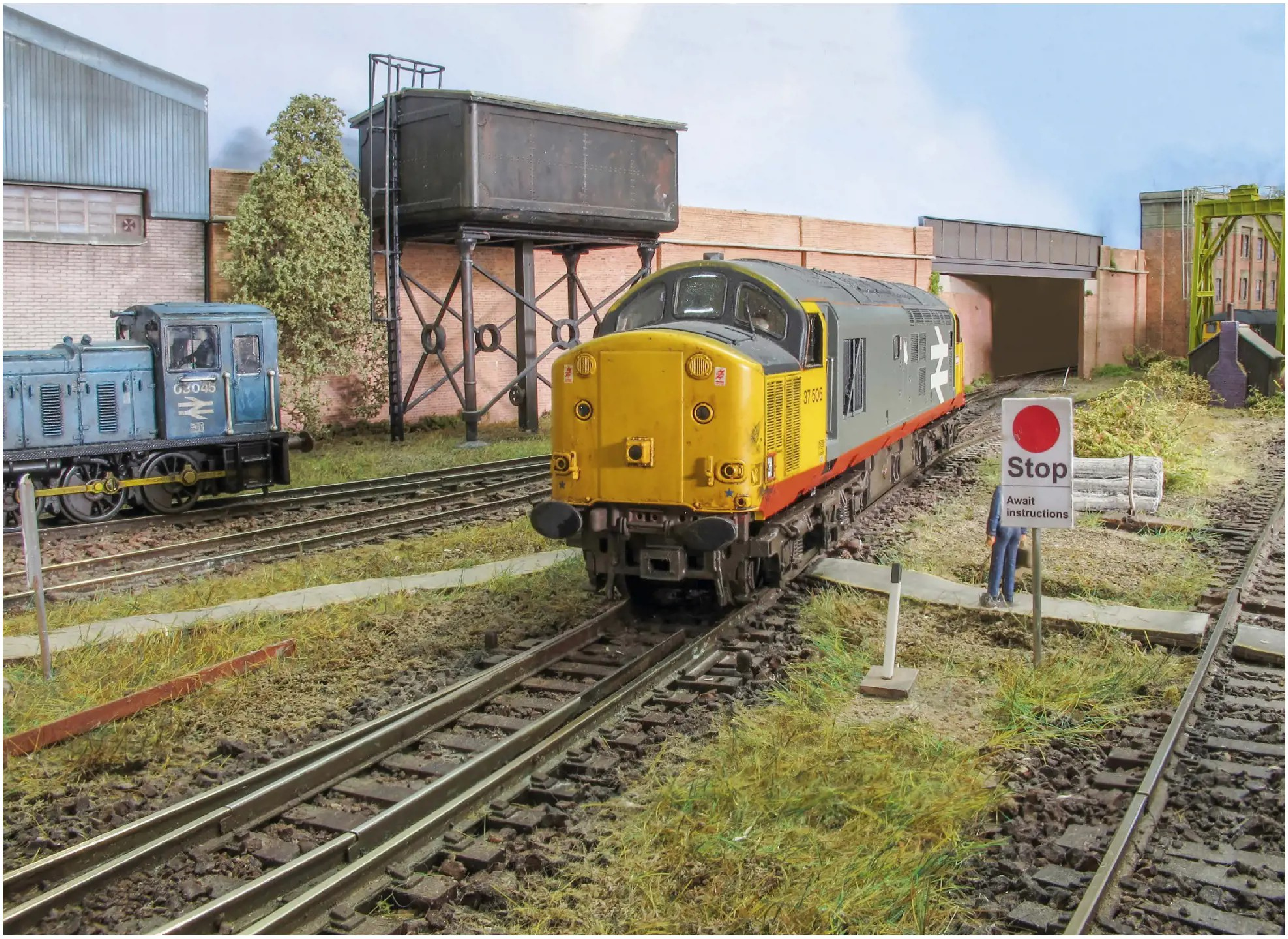
TOP LEFT: A Class 47 in Network SouthEast livery moves around the depot behind the diesel storage tanks.

MIDDLE LEFT: The Class 08 depot shunter in Network Southeast livery rests between duties outside the maintenance shed.

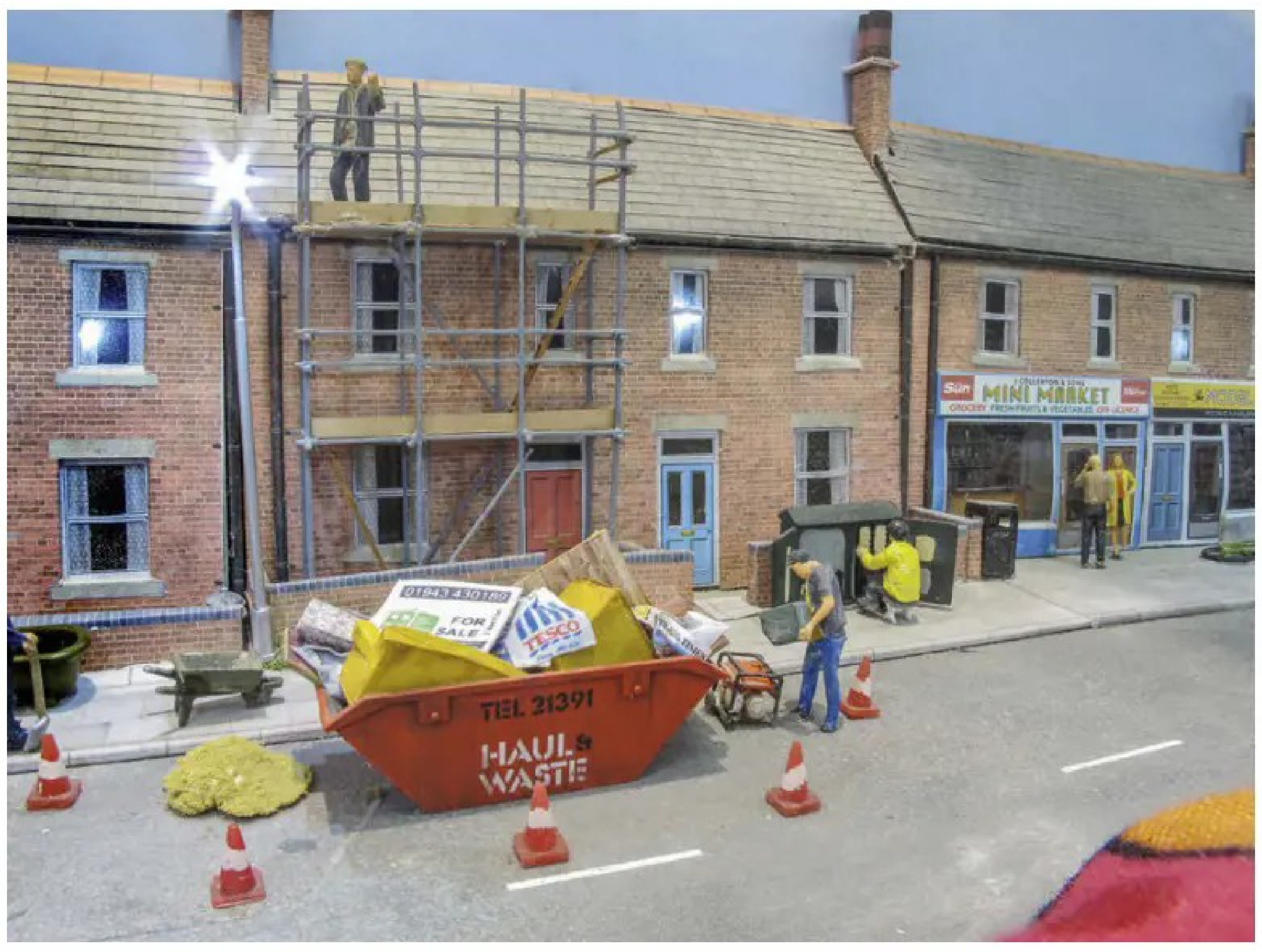
BOTTOM: The disused water tower stands proud over a Class 50, which has arrived for refuelling and servicing. The depot shunter can be seen behind, pushing a failed locomotive into the servicing shed for attention.

> "From my point of view, the scenery is one of the key elements to a railway layout and needs to appear realistic to make the whole scene work..."

50040
Stop
Await instructions



ABOVE: A Railfreight-liveried Class 37 moves on to the depot for stabling while a Class 03 stands on the servicing road awaiting attention.



MIDDLE RIGHT: Builder Pete can be seen filling the generator up with fuel while Dave shouts instructions from the top of the scaffold. Of interest is the yellow Draylon three-piece, carefully placed within the skip, and the avocado colour bath, which has been removed as part of the building works.

BOTTOM RIGHT: A general view of 'Daisy Lane' with a potential new customer intrigued by the skill and dexterity of Toby the local window cleaner going about his work.

Key buildings

The buildings are a variety of different architectural styles, constructed from a variety of materials and processes. The main engine running shed, which is the largest structure on the layout, is a scratch-built construction from detailed plastic sections and cladding. It is designed to simulate a diesel area structure, which has been altered and maintained throughout its life to suit requirements.

The other main shed on the layout, the maintenance shed, started life as a downloadable kit and has been supplemented with the addition of the internal portal frame steel structure.

Both the sheds have been constructed with the roof covering removed; this was chosen following the installation of the detailing elements within the sheds and the fact that this needed to be on display at exhibitions. These interiors include a variety of staff performing various duties, from maintenance of the locos to welding and other works. The fact that these structures have no roofs provides a great talking point at exhibitions and is commonly the most asked question - why have you chosen to do it this way?

The buildings located along 'Daisy Lane' are also downloaded kits and elements from the Scalescenes range and are constructed in various guises to form a Victorian terrace-style street scene. Two commercial shops are also included within the street, one a model

About the modeller

Name: Simon Lemmon
Age: 53 years
Number of years modelling:
Over 40 years
Name of your first layout:
Never had a name
Favourite era/region: Eastern Region
Favourite locomotive: Stratford Class 47s

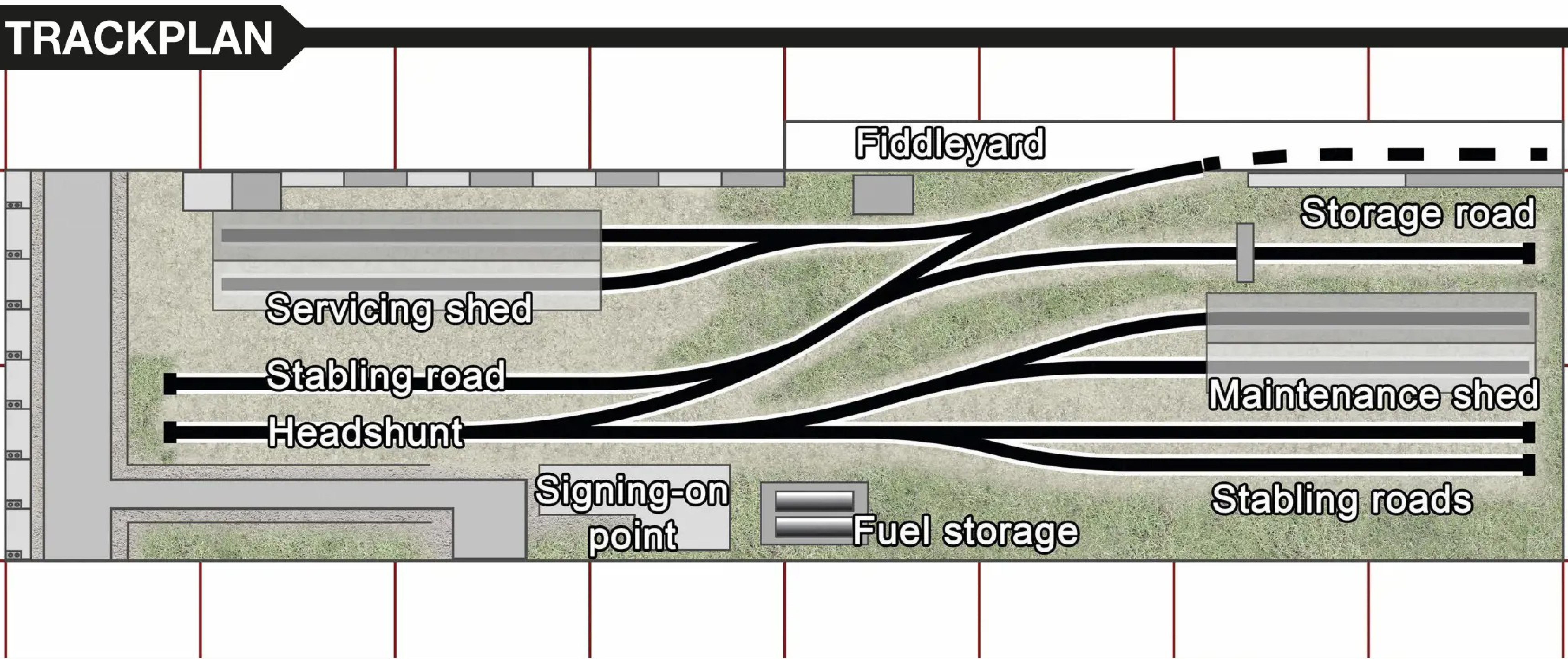
My interest in railways started when I was young, my parents bought me a 'Flying Scotsman' train set in the late-1970s and it went from there. My uncle was also into railways and spotting and, over the years, we covered several miles to various locations within the British Isles.

Of course, like most boys, this enthusiasm waned slightly when girls came along. However, I have got back into the hobby in the last 20 years and find that taking 'Daisy Lane TMD' to exhibitions, together with being a member of a local model railway club and also being interested in the real railway, has really helped my mental health in the recent years as I can switch off and enjoy myself.

I am fortunate in that I have a purpose-built room, which measures about 15ft x 8ft and is a room just for my model railway layout and associated paraphernalia.

When building the layout, I generally spent Saturday afternoons in the room with the football on the radio, and it was my way of switching off from the previous week's work. There is still work that I want to do to the room, such as shelving, etc., which will hopefully allow room for another layout to be started in the same area.

TRACKPLAN



LEFT: A Class 24 locomotive is stabled under the mechanical hoist on the storage road adjacent to the maintenance shed.

TOP RIGHT: Recently removed used wheelsets sit outside the maintenance shed awaiting movement to the nearby works for overhaul.

MIDDLE RIGHT: A Railfreight-livered Class 56 stands resting on the stabling roads awaiting its next duty, while a Class 37 sits on the adjacent road.

BELOW: A Network Southeast Class 50 locomotive moves to Daisy Lane TMD for its next duty. It is good to see that John, one of the depot drivers, has seen the approaching loco and remained on the walkway until the loco has passed.

shop and one a takeaway establishment. The remaining buildings, including the rail office, store and canteen, together with the low-relief buildings around the extent of the layout, are also downloaded kits, which have also been embellished with additional elements.

Creating the scene

From my point of view, the scenery is one of the key elements to a railway layout and needs to appear realistic to make the whole scene work, which involves a considerable amount of detail in areas. The ‘Daisy Lane’ street scene contains several little cameos; we have the builders, Pete, Dave and Joe of Leggett Brothers Builders, working on repairs to the roof of no. 17 Daisy Lane. We have Tim and Mavis in deep discussion outside the shop, and towards the front of the layout, we have a potential new customer watching Toby, the local window cleaner, going about his work. Over on the depot, we have spotters Tom and Joe writing down the number, while trouble approaches in the form of Bill, one of the depot shunters. Ted, the depot foreman, looks on while Montgomery oversees the fuelling point and Phil busies himself on the forklift truck.

The depot has been constructed to replicate an original steam facility with the original brick build shed and now disused water tower, which has been improved over the years with alterations and new buildings added, including the large running shed structure to cope with more modern diesel locos. The office, canteen and staff facilities are also structures added approximately in the 1960s and are made to be prefabricated with a flat roof. This structure also

Network SouthEast
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contains many cameos internally, especially within the main canteen area, and is often found by small children as they are generally at the correct height to look straight through the windows. Old sleepers and general detritus are dotted around the depot, which have accumulated over the years. There is a collection of industrial units that back onto the depot with small fenced areas to the rear, which contain a collection of materials, scrap and a shipping container used for storage. The site also contains several trees that have been allowed to grow over the years due to poor management and maintenance, and an area of rough ground to the front, which is often visited by the BR Land Rover to attend to minor repairs to locomotives awaiting their next turn of duty.

It's showtime

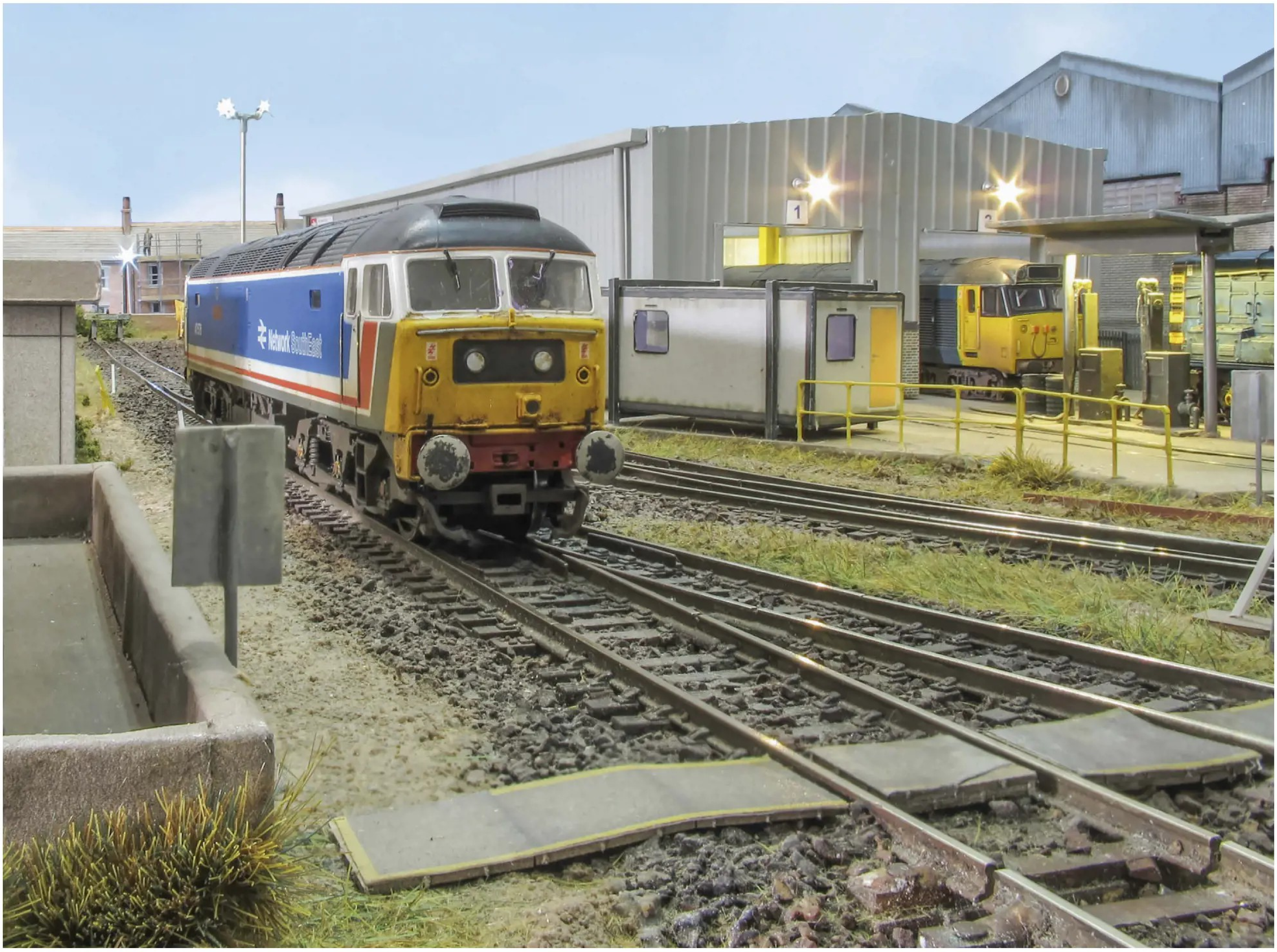
Due to the setting between the late-1980s and early-1990s, a wide variety of locomotives pay regular visits to 'Daisy Lane'. They include Class 08s, 20s, 31s, 37s, 45s, 47s, 50s, 56's and 60s, all of which are in a variety of liveries, including Network SouthEast, British Rail Blue, Railfreight and one-off specials. The locomotives are mainly ready-to-run from the major manufacturers, including Bachmann, Hornby and Heljan, with the occasional visit of some older Lima models. The majority have been weathered using various methods to give the feeling of grimy run-down locos, which was a typical feel of the railways at that stage.

LEFT: It is a busy period at the fuel point today, with three locomotives in attendance. However, one of the fuel point staff members, Montgomery, appears to be taking it easy. Let's hope Ted, the Depot Foremen, is not around.

MIDDLE LEFT: An internal view of the servicing shed with a single Class 47 in residence.

> "The fact that these structures have no roofs provides a great talking point at exhibitions and is commonly the most asked question..."

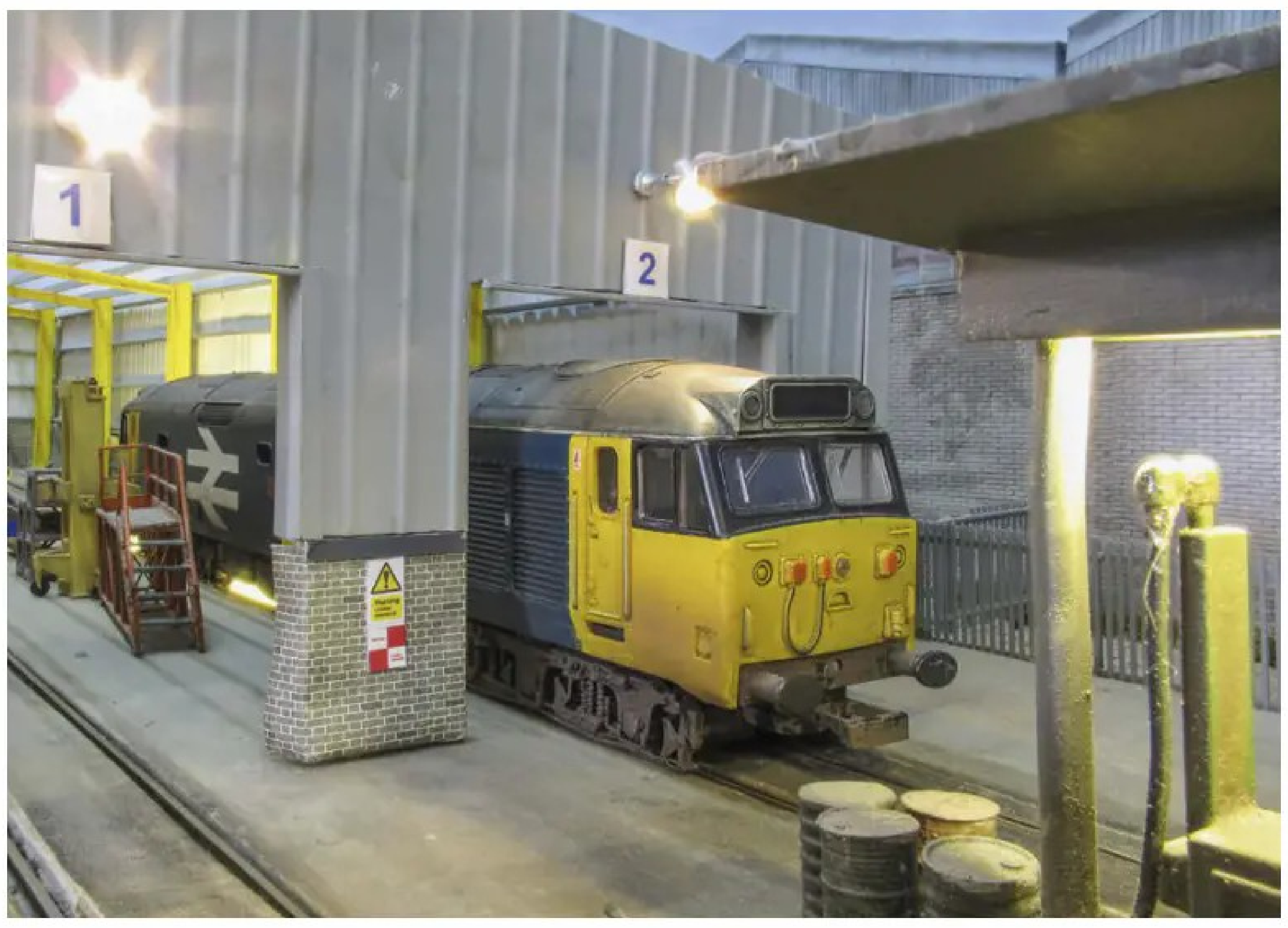
BOTTOM: A single Railfreight Class 20 heads to Daisy Lane TMD for its next duty. Ted, the Depot Foreman, watches on while Phil performs a handbrake turn on the depot's forklift truck.

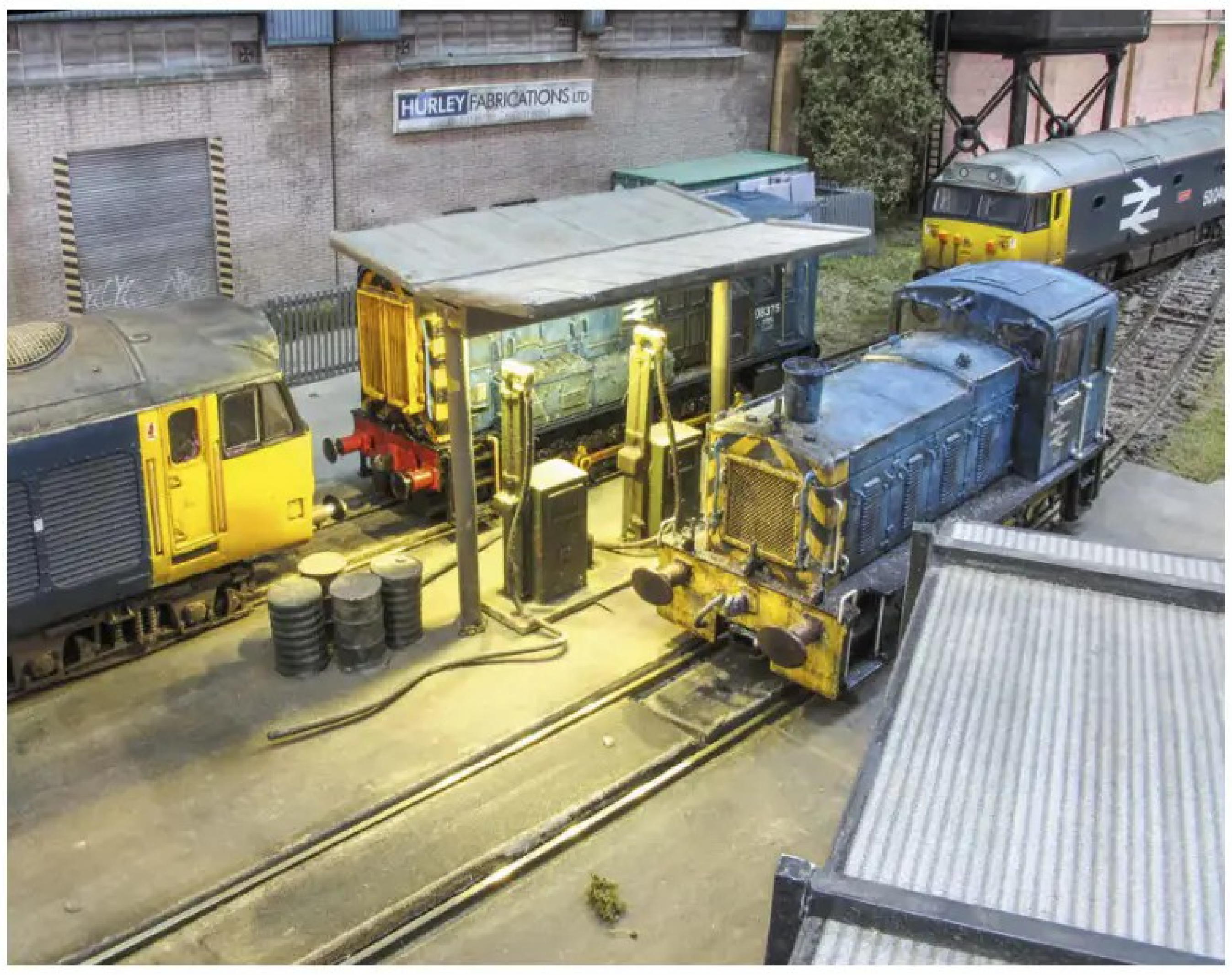


When the layout is at exhibitions, it includes three supporting legs with a name board and overall layout lighting above, which works very well and provides light across the whole of the layout. This was designed to be installed at a height so the average person would not see the lighting across the layout when viewing it. This, however, has generated a problem where, as people see the buildings without roofs and detailed items within, tend to lean into the layout for a closer look, which has resulted in some people head-butting the name board. With hindsight, this should have been higher, although this would have had a knock-on effect as it would have been difficult to fit the layout into the back of a car. It does not cause a problem at most exhibitions, and we do keep a running total of the amount of head-butts that we get. I think to date the most we have had is 12.

When operating the layout at exhibitions, we tend not to operate any specific timetable; instead, the various locos enter and leave 'Daisy Lane TMD' with the intention of ensuring that there is always an interesting mix of locos and liveries on the layout at all times.

The layout is DCC-controlled via a Gaugemaster Prodigy 11 system, which has proved very reliable. The points and lighting are controlled by a traditional DC system with a toggle switch providing the control element. I enjoy taking 'Daisy Lane TMD' to exhibitions and hope that this will continue for a few years yet.

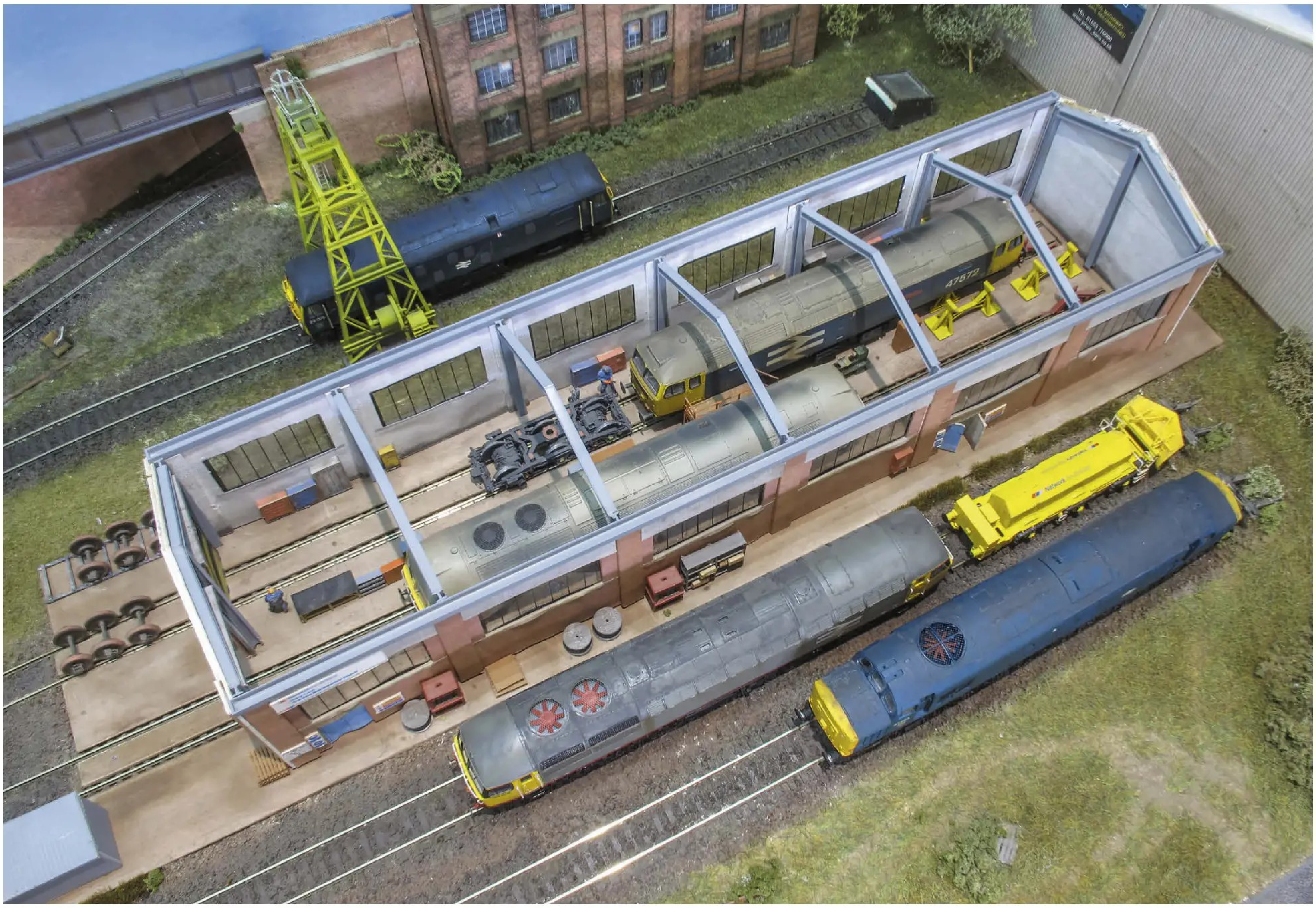




ABOVE: A Network Southeast-livered Class 47 arrives on the stabling roads after receiving maintenance in the servicing shed.

MIDDLE RIGHT: A large logo Class 50 leaves number two road of the servicing shed following maintenance prior to stabling on the depot.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Dusk is starting to descend as a collection of locomotives has returned home to roost on the fuel point, all of which require attention.



ABOVE: An overall view of the maintenance shed on Daisy Lane TMD, which contains two Class 47s undergoing maintenance. Outside, a Class 37 and Class 56 sit on the stabling roads adjacent to one of the depot's snowploughs.

MIDDLE RIGHT: An internal view of the maintenance shed with two Class 47s undergoing maintenance.

BOTTOM RIGHT: An overall view of the servicing shed with a class 50 receiving attention on number 2 road. Outside, a Class 20 sits on the stabling road adjacent to one of the depot's snowploughs.

Reflections

The area of the layout that pleases me the most is the main scratch-built running shed and the concrete apron area to the front with the fuelling point. With the roof removed from the structure, I felt that the internal structural steel portal frame, together with the cladding rails, needed to be included as this is a key element to the structure. This is due to my occupation as a director of a chartered architects' practice.

There are a couple of elements that I want to include in the future, such as the bracing within the frame, and this will follow in due course. Externally, the concrete apron with the fuelling point works well and is the area where people at exhibitions tend to take the most photographs.

I think the best advice I could give to other modellers is to create a layout that is both within your scope and budget. A lot of people would love to model the East Coast Main Line, myself included, running full-length trains, but with today's prices, this is very expensive. The other factor to bear in mind is the amount of work there is to do on a large layout and, if you are not careful, you can very quickly lose interest, and the enjoyment of building a layout turns into a chore and then will never be finished. If you start off with a small- to medium-sized layout, you can still try a wide variety of modelling techniques on all the various elements that goes into making a model railway. Each one will not take too long, meaning the layout will get to a level more quickly where you can run trains while adding the scenery as you go.

TOP RIGHT: Tina and Doreen run a very popular canteen facility for the depot staff of Daisy Lane TMD, located within the 1960s prefabricated admin building. The selection of hot and cold food on offer is well received by the employees and helps to ensure that good staff morale is maintained.

MIDDLE RIGHT: An Intercity-livered Class 47 is dominated by the mechanical hoist and the adjacent commercial building as it awaits its next duty.

BOTTOM: Two of the depot's allocated shunters sit on the fuelling point awaiting attention. Judging by the external appearance of the faded paintwork and the accumulation of dirt, it looks like it has been a while since either locomotive has received a major overhaul.

Looking at the future, there are still several items that I would like to add. These include buffer stop lighting and lighting to the houses, operated by a sequencer so the various lights will come on and go off in a random pattern. The latter, of course, will also mean that the internal rooms fitted with lights will also need to be added. I also want to add more detail to the locomotives, including front-end detail, and more employees and details on the depot itself, so there is still plenty to do. Although, how long this will take me is still to be decided. Once completed, I would like to build a terminus station layout set in the same era. However, I am not sure whether this will be an exhibition layout. ■

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> "Externally, the concrete apron with the fuelling point works well and is the area where people at exhibitions tend to take the most photographs."

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Getting Practical with...

TOOL of the MONTH

Stanley 6-way screwdriver

I own at least four examples of the older version of this tool. Well, I used to until I lent one out and it never came home. Now re-released, we get 6.5 and 5mm flat blades, PH2 and PH1 cross heads – the smaller is surprisingly useful for dismantling models, and 6.5 and 8mm hex heads. Robust and with an easy-grip handle, I use this more than any other large screwdriver. It even opens tins of paint!

HAMILTON PALACE COLLIERY
135

Ask Phil

How do you seal weathering powders on a model?

I don't. If you apply to a matt surface, the microscopic texture of the paint or varnish will grab the powders, making them adhere to the model. Admittedly, some brands stick slightly better than others, but I've not had any problems in the past. Sealing with a coat of varnish will change the colour of the powder, and if you apply too much, can even turn it into a liquid, which runs down the side! If any powder does wear off due to handling, it's easily reapplied later.

New on the workbench

Deluxe Materials – Loco Motion Oil

Finding lubricants for model locos is trickier than you might think. Oil too thick will gum the model up. It's also essential it doesn't attack the plastic or paint. Loco Motion oil claims to add a liquid film that reduces friction between moving parts, ensuring that the lubrication is acting the moment the model moves. It's also in a really nice applicator which allows accurate placement of the the oil in a chassis without getting it anywhere you don't want it.

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APPLICATOR INCLUDED

Phil Parker

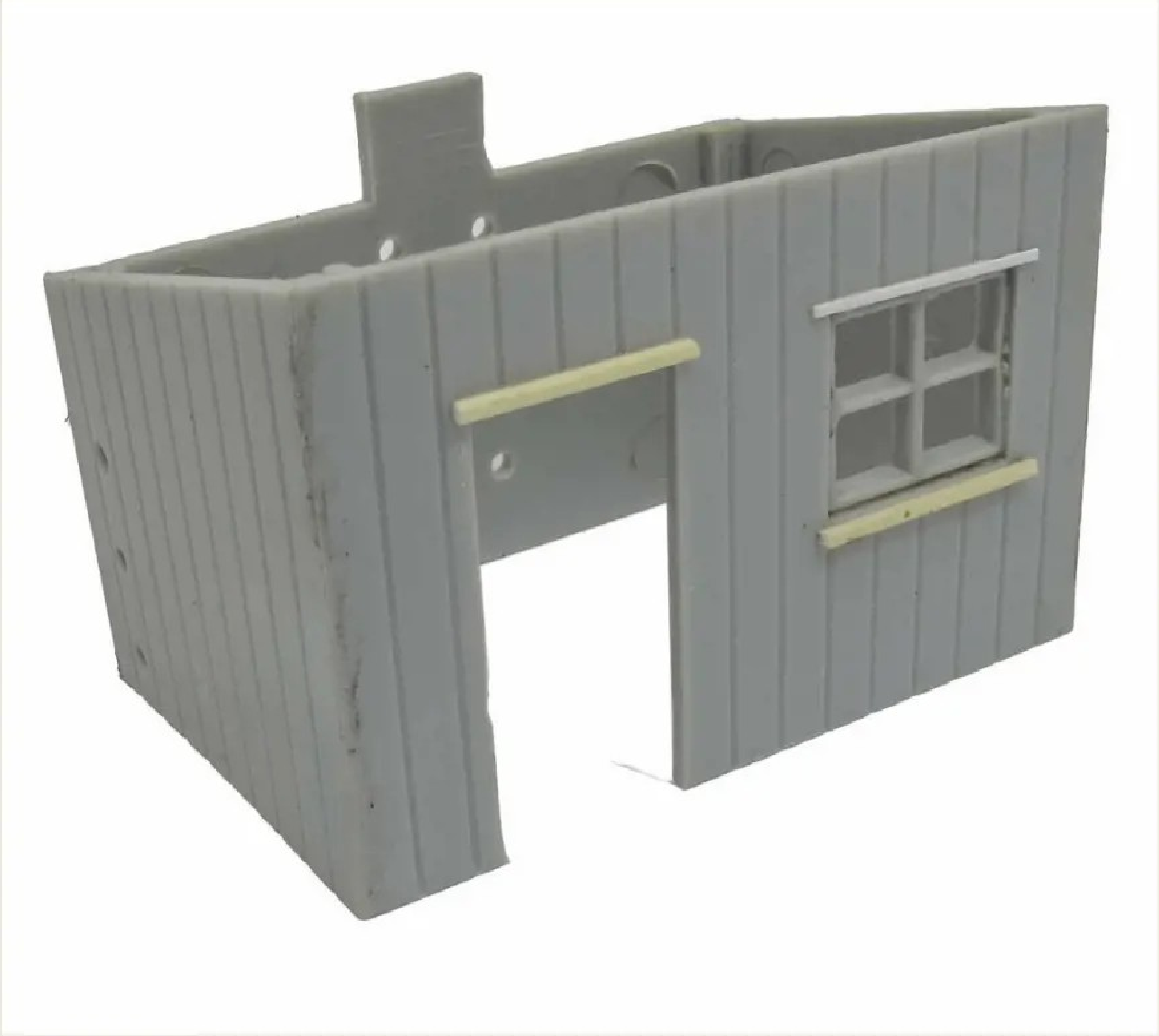
Michael Russell

Tony Wright

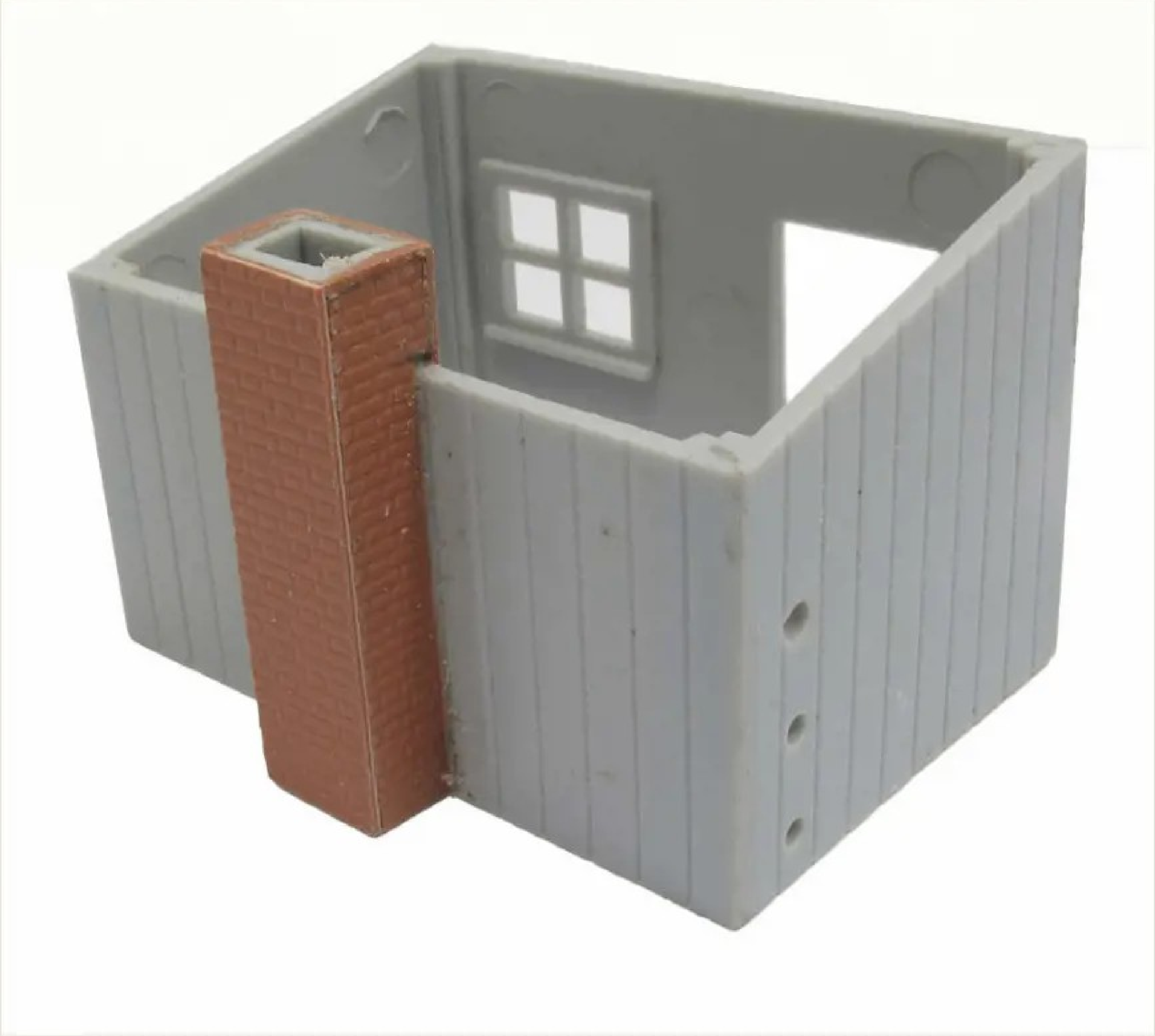
Chris Mead

Build a platelayers' hut

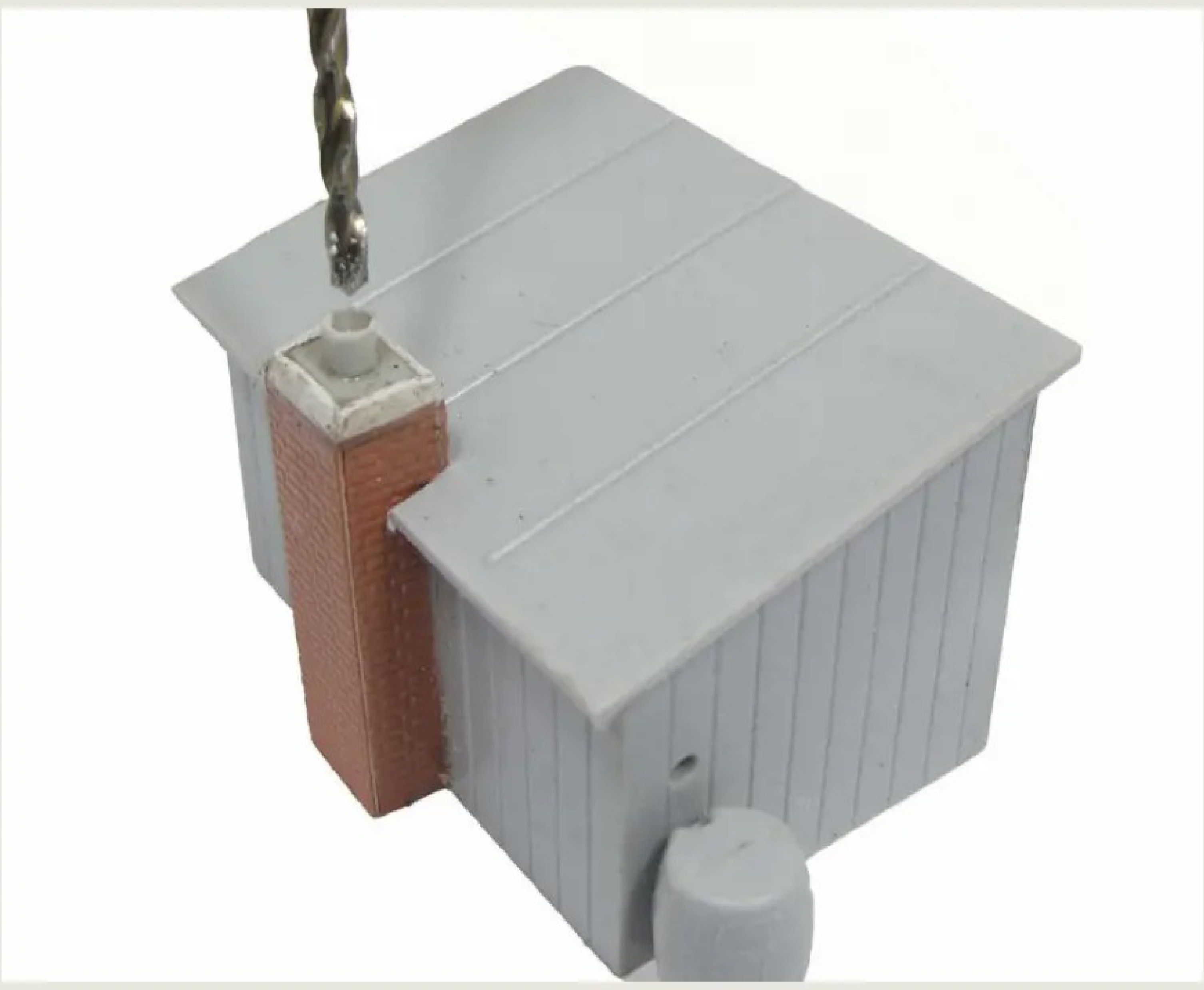
Dapol's platelayers' hut, part of the ex-Airfix Trackside Accessories pack, might be older than many BRM readers, but it can still be turned into a nice model.



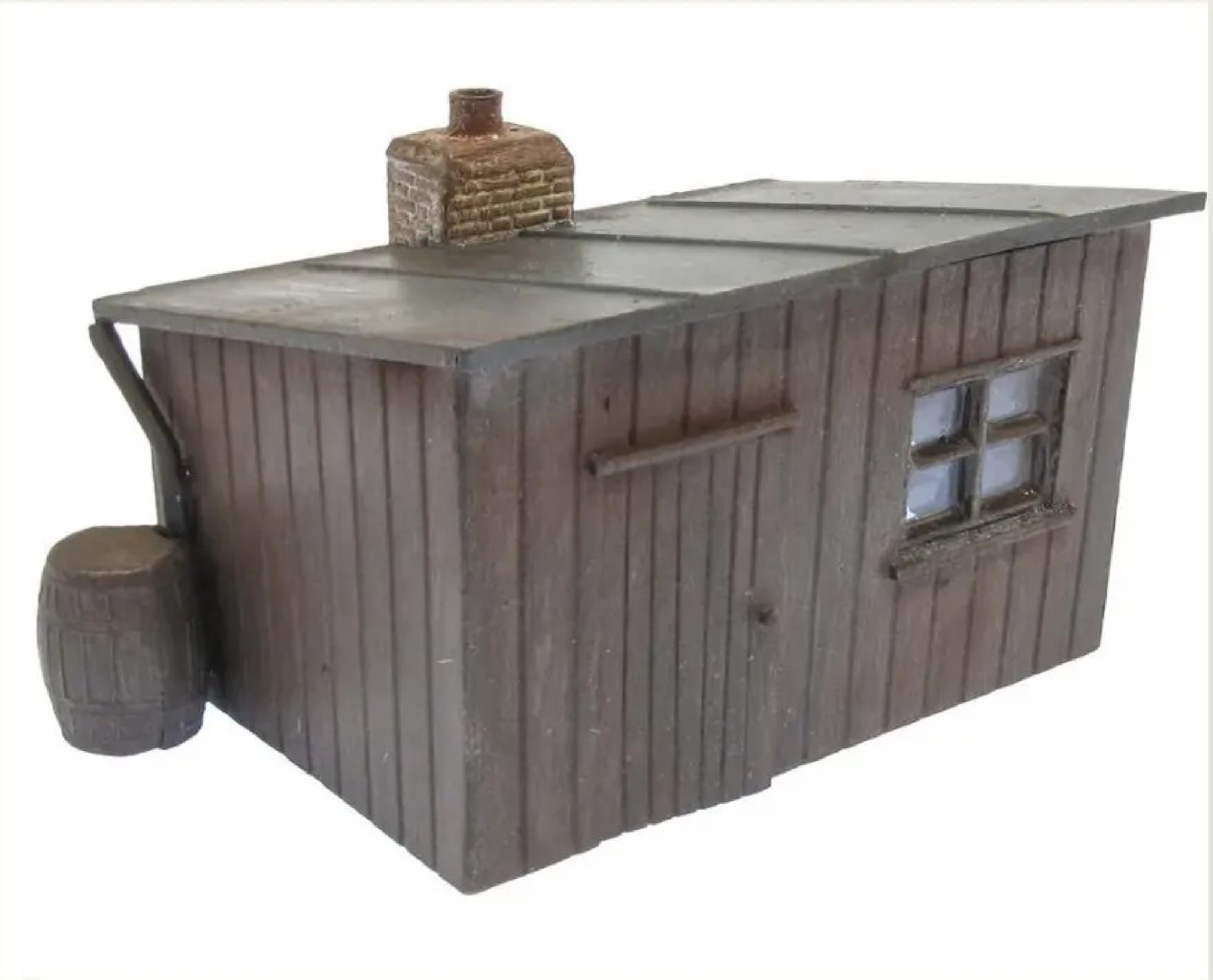
1 The biggest improvement you can make to this model is to fit the window from the inside, not outside as instructed, and add a lintel and sill from Slater's Microstrip.



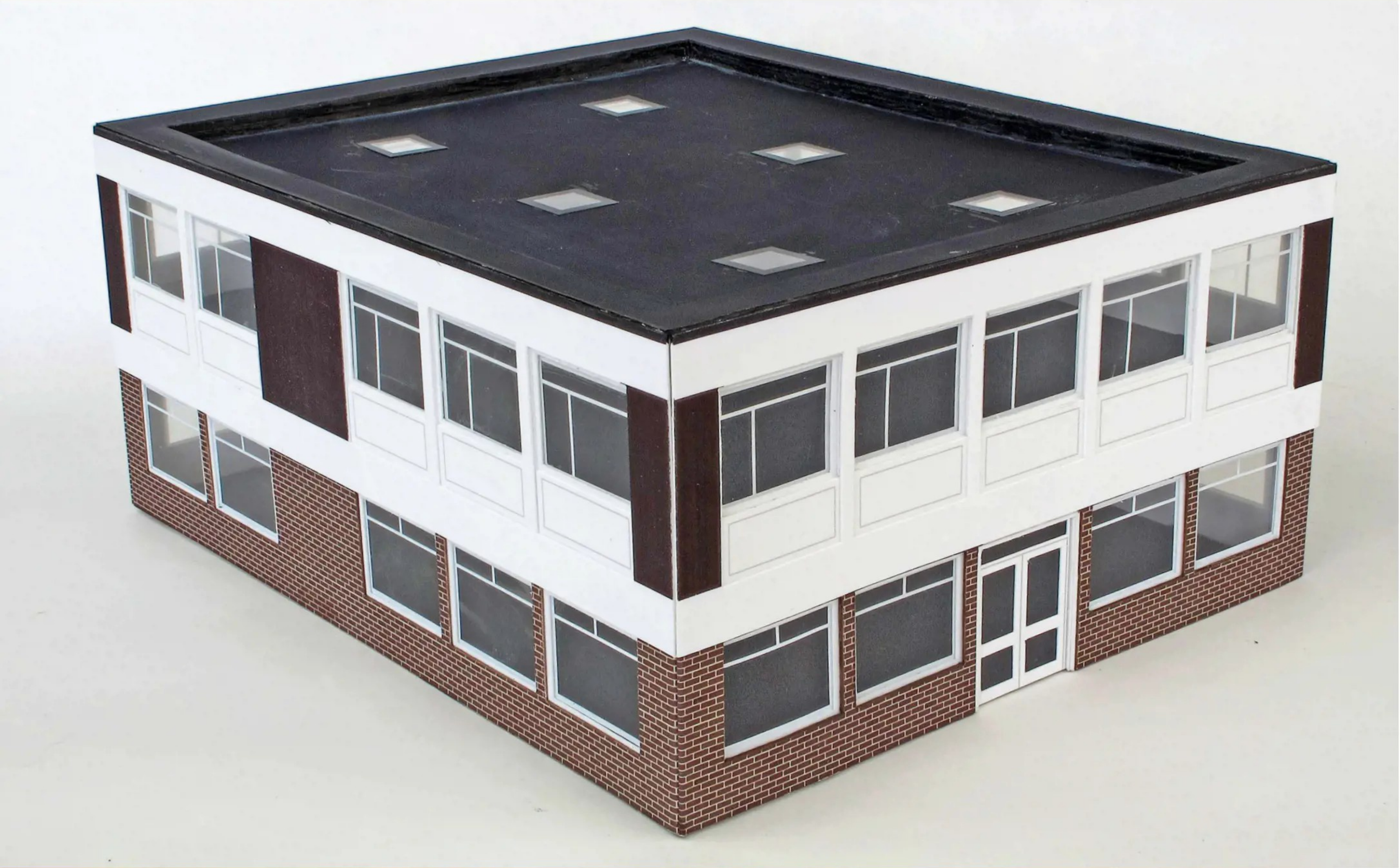
2 The kits dates from a time when recessed detail, such as rivets and mortar lines, was represented by raising them. It's a quick job to sand the mortar lines off the chimney and wrap it in embossed Plastikard.



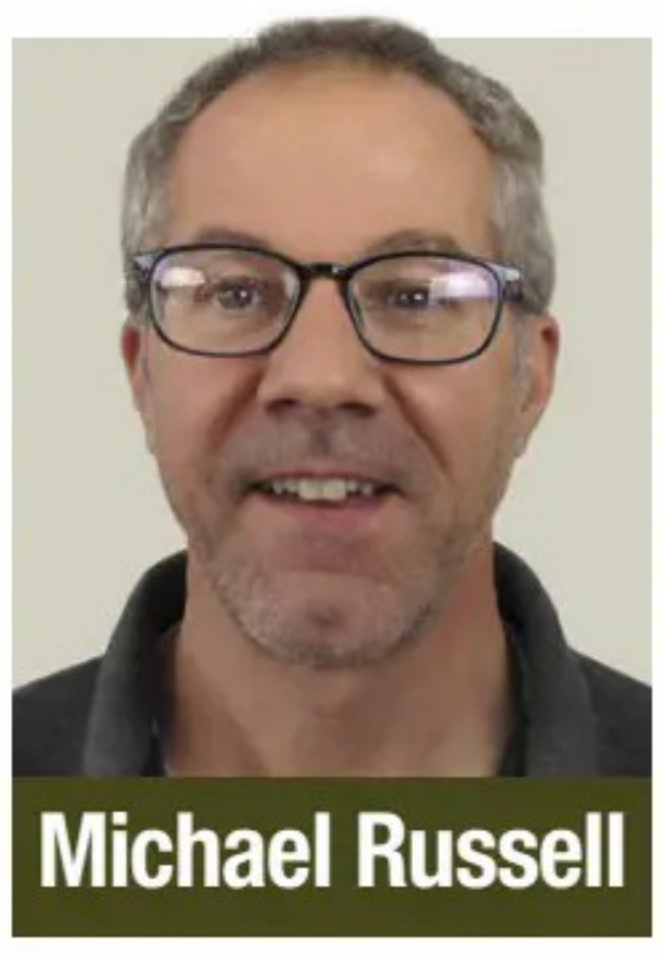
3 Any model building, including ready-to-plant ones, is improved by carefully drilling out the chimney pot. You can see I've beefed up the top of the chimney cap with some Plastikard around the edges, too. It's far more prototypical, I think.



4 The model is sprayed with grey primer and then treated to a thin coat of Humbrol 173 (Track colour), which allows the primer to show through, replicating wood fading in the sun. A dusting of talcum and brown weathering powders, and it's ready for the layout.



Build an ATD Office Block



Michael Russell

THIS OFFICE Block from ATD Models is pre-cut from card and is a handy item for use in a town or city scene. Although it is sold as a 1970s building, I think it could be used for any time period up until now. It would look good alongside other card kits, but may not sit as well with plastic, resin, or cast buildings. PVA glue was used for assembly.

The building is a simple shape and it should be easy to build if you follow my modification for fitting the first floor. Since a lot of lamination is involved, and there are times when you are waiting for glue to dry, it is an ideal project to spread across a series of half-hour sessions.

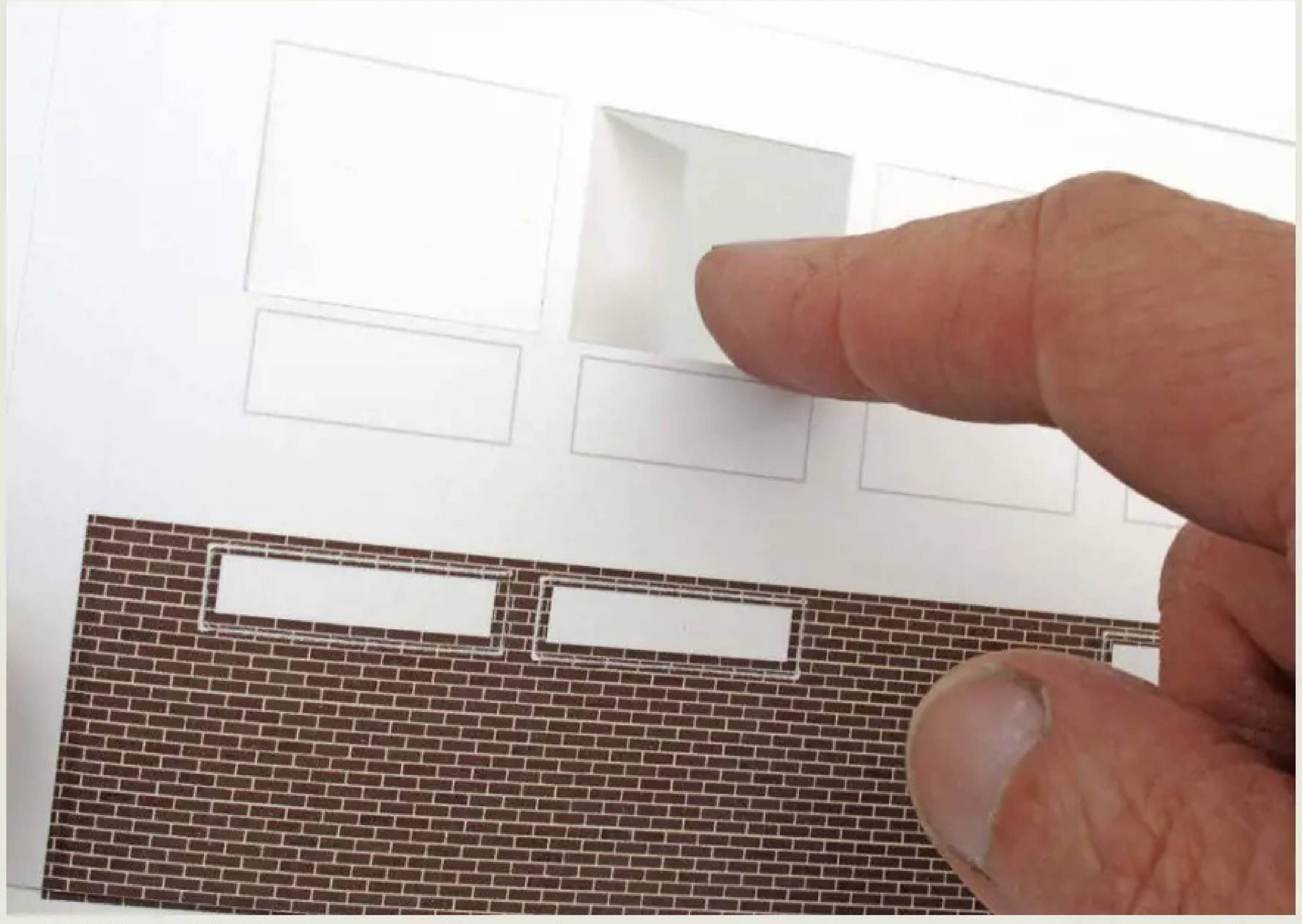
The empty interior is very obvious and so this building would be an ideal candidate for fitting window diffuser film such as that supplied by Woodland Scenics. This needs to be added as part of the build and would be difficult to retrofit.

The building could be improved and personalised by adding downpipes, a fire escape, signage and air conditioning units.

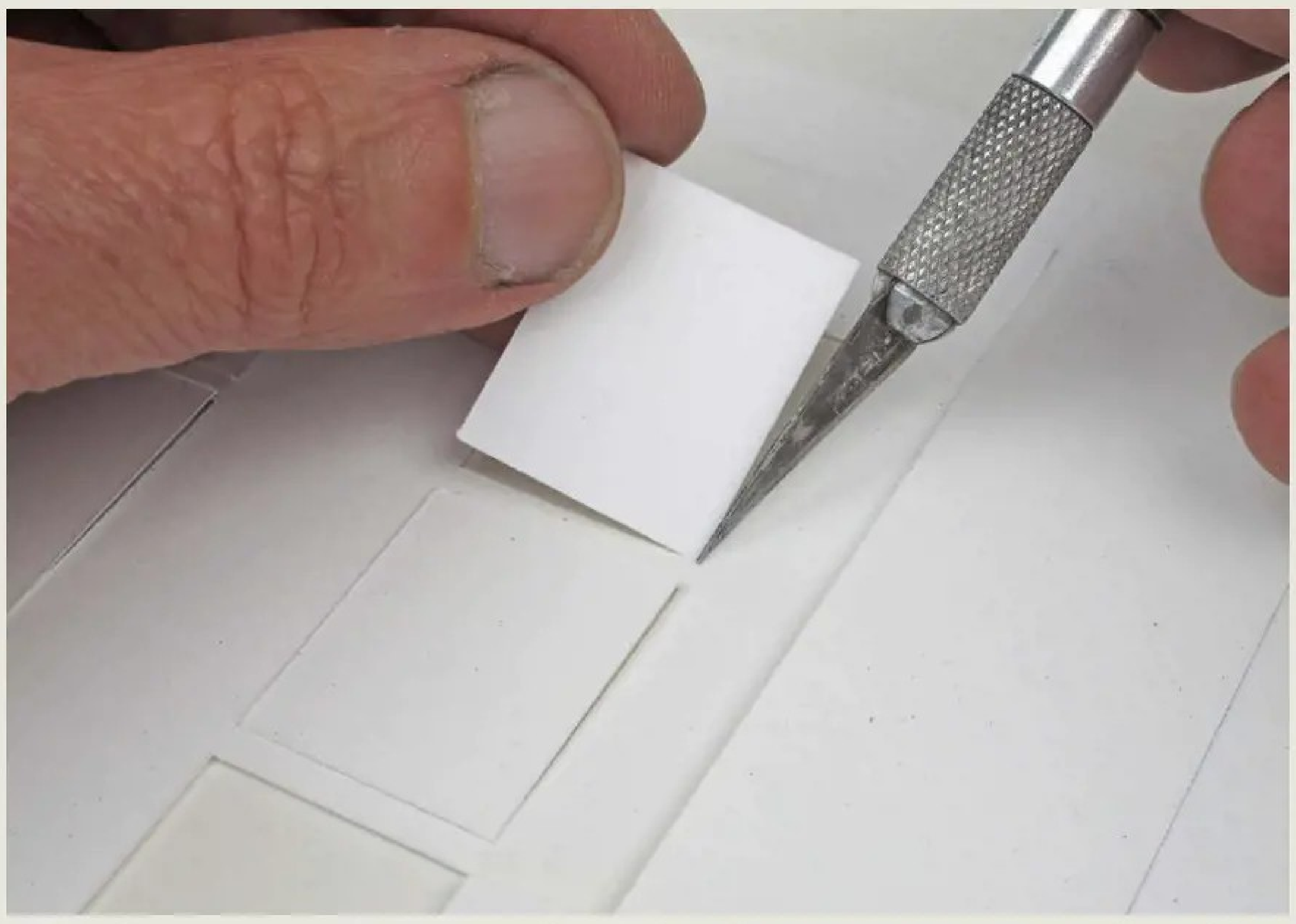
WHAT YOU NEED

ATD Models
ATD014 OO 1970s Office Block

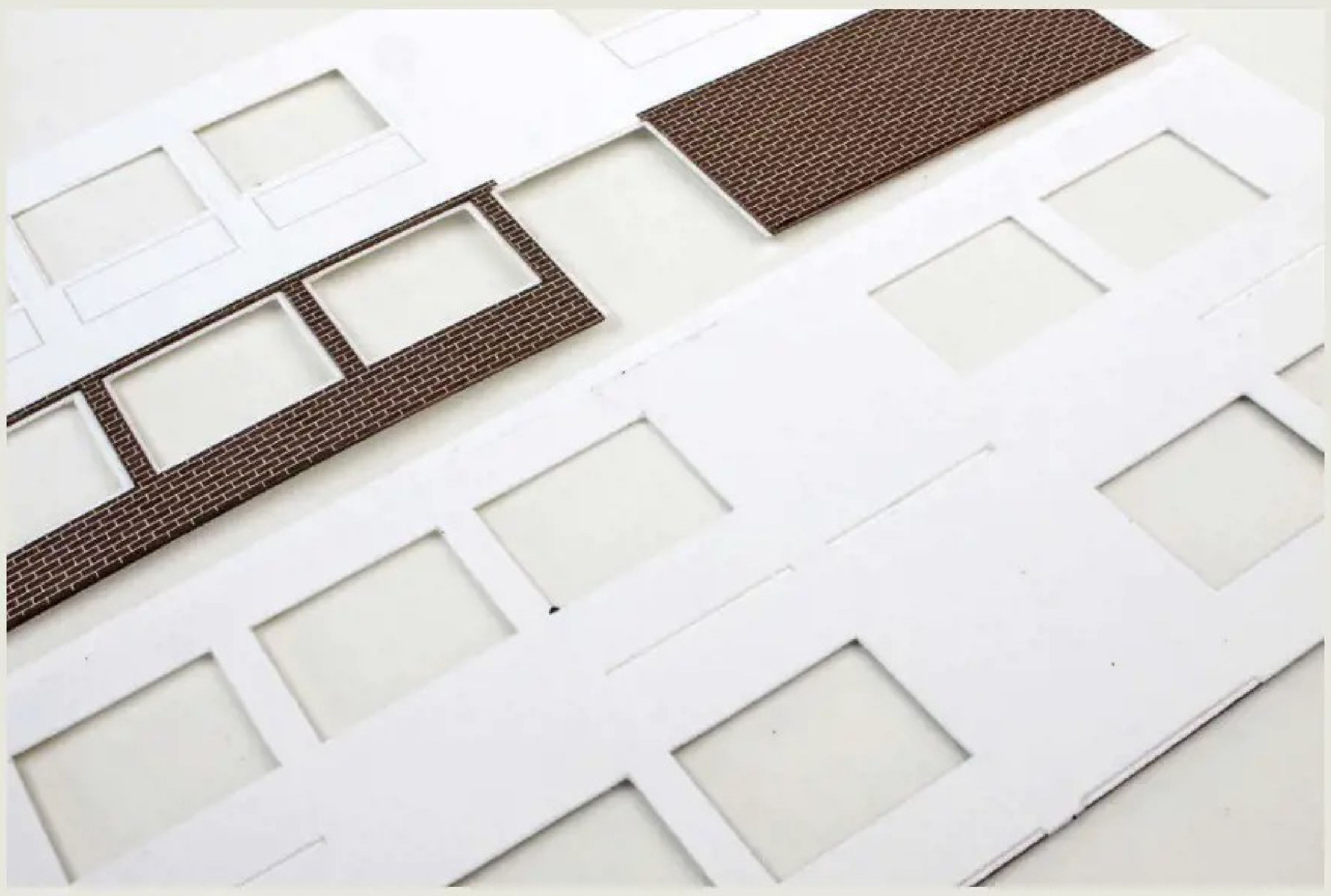
Other
Household filler, black and dark brown craft acrylic, PVA glue, books for weighting, sharp craft knife, steel rule, a large mirror or other flat surface, bulldog clips, damp sponge or rag, scissors.



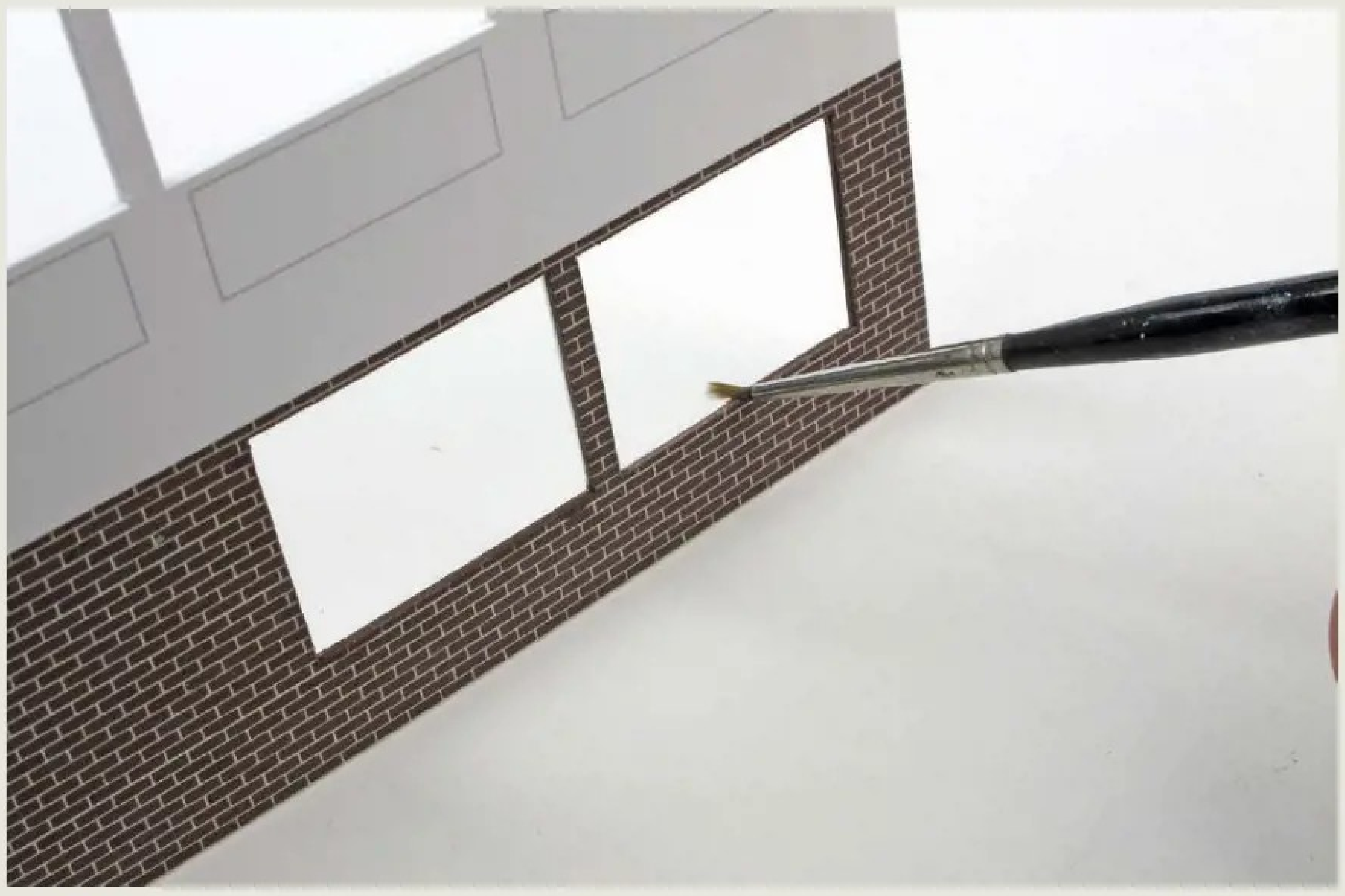
1 The kit is pre-cut and, as such, is very accurate and will require little work. Many of the cutouts will have become displaced in transit, but if not, a gentle poke with a finger will often do the trick.



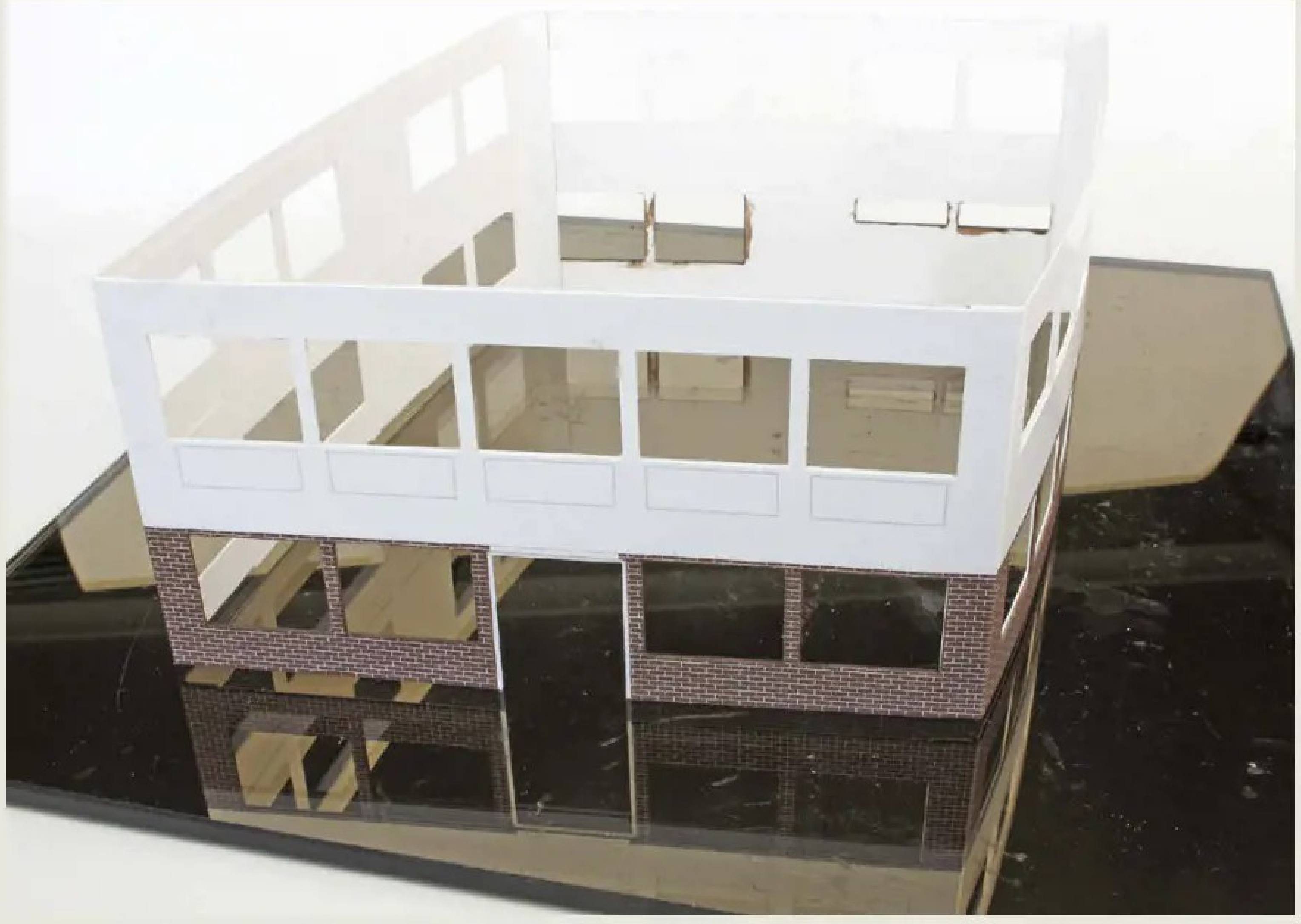
2 Remove any parts that don't come away easily with a sharp knife, being careful to be precise and not to deviate from the course of the pre-cut line. Often only a single corner of each part requires attention.



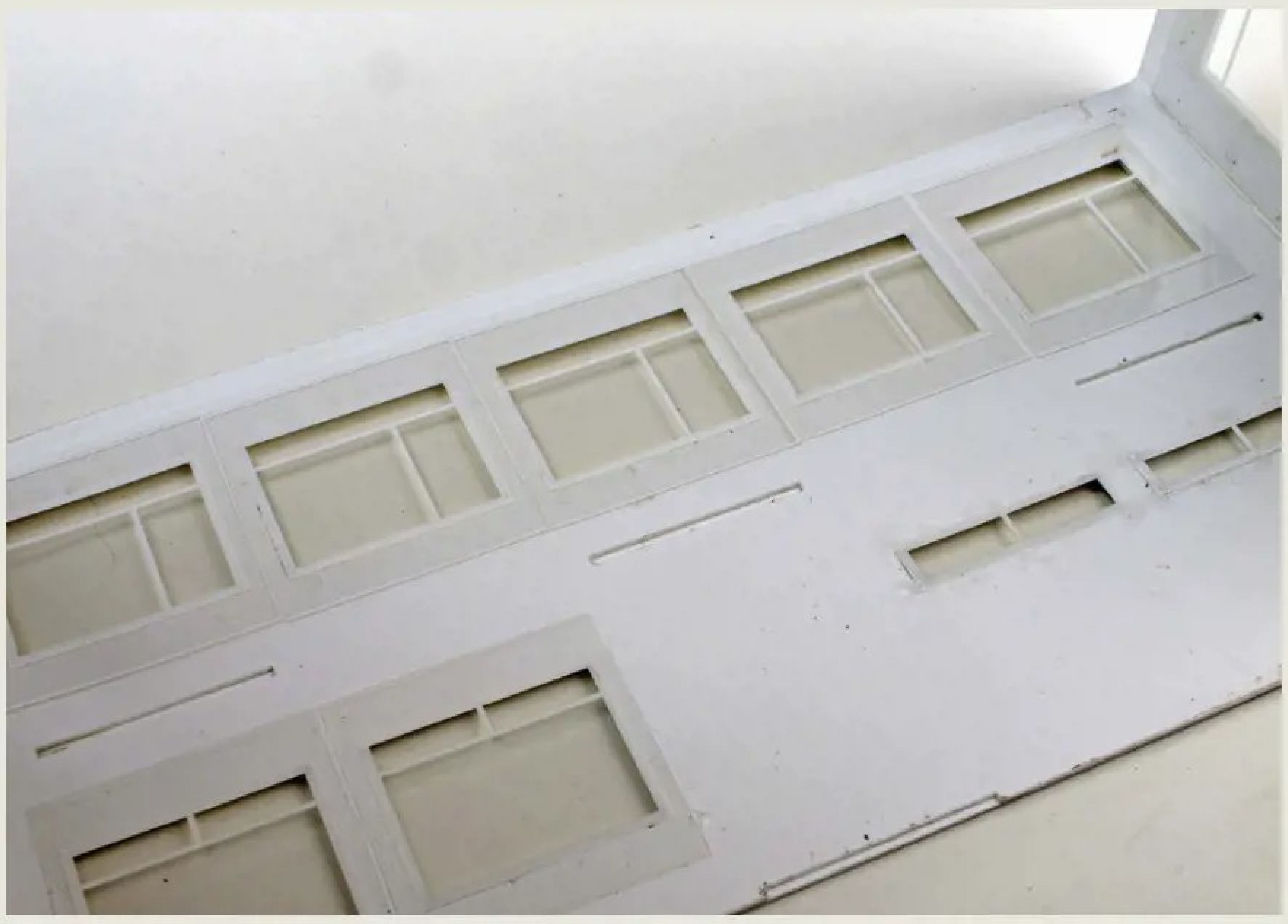
3 It is important that you treat the base of the building as your datum point that everything aligns to. This will leave an even gap at the top of the internal wall laminations for the roof to fit onto.



4 Paint brick edges once the laminations have been added. I would recommend using dark brown acrylic paint and the cheaper craft variety will suffice. The roof vents can be treated similarly with black paint.

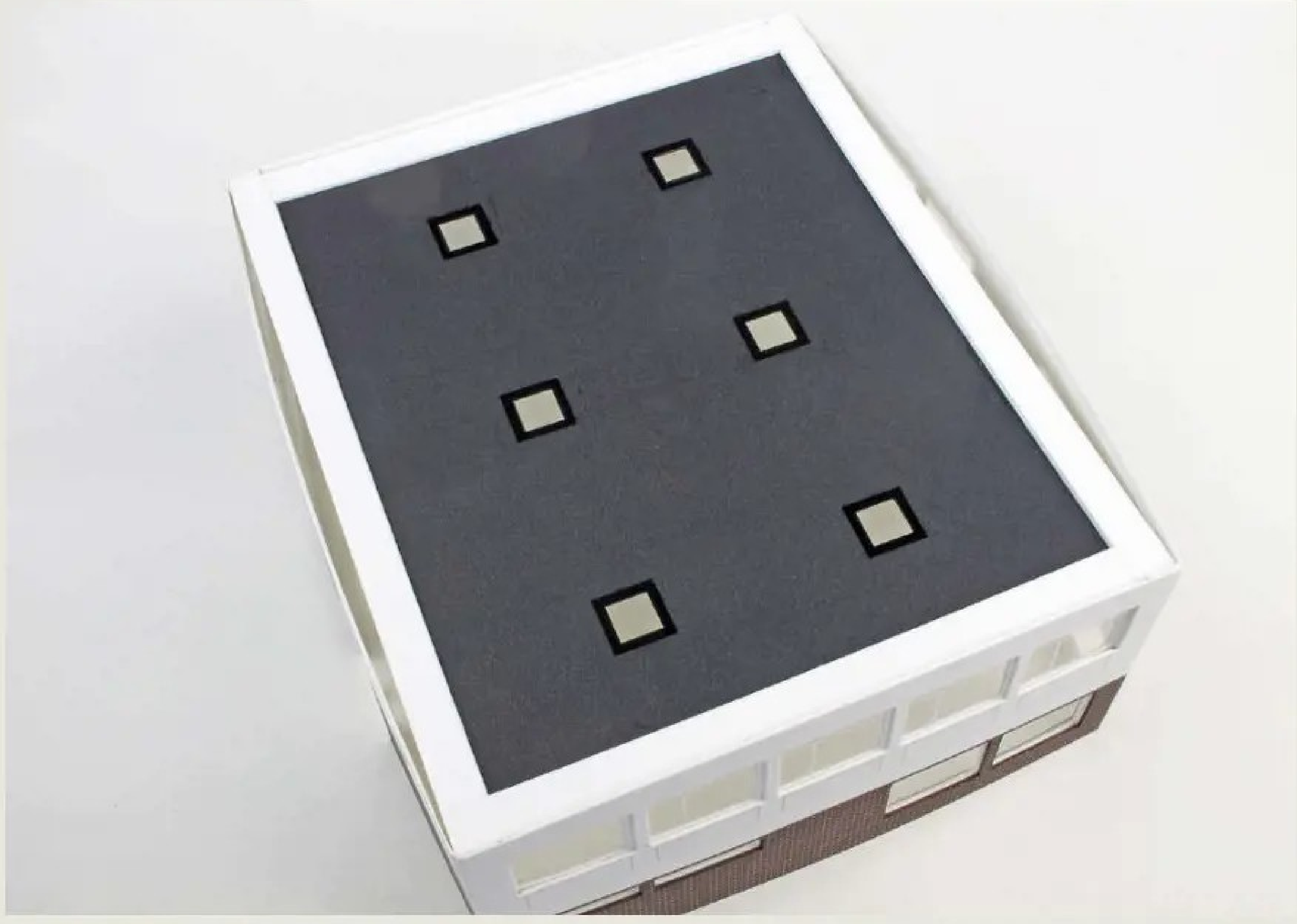


5 When gluing the four walls together, ensure that you build on a flat surface, such as a mirror, to ensure that the building is square. I used bulldog clips to hold the corner joints in place while the glue set.

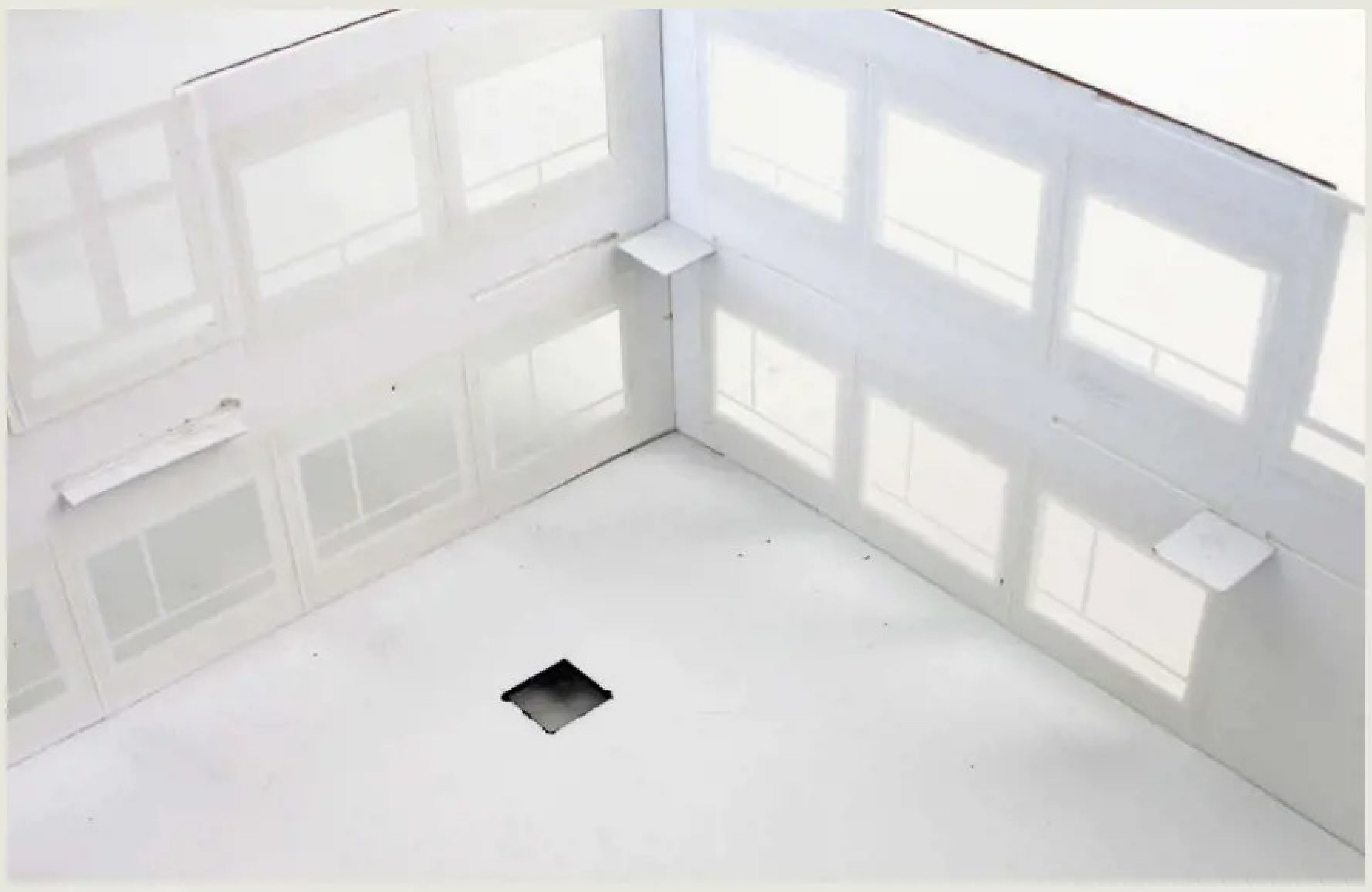


6 The upper windows have asymmetric window bars, so decide on a pattern and stick to it. Be careful not to glue any of the windows in upside down. Have a final check before the glue has dried.

7 If you use PVA glue, then when dry, the windows can be carefully polished with a damp cloth to remove any adhesive marks. Ensure that the cloth is only damp as water will damage the cardboard walls.



8 Drop the roof into the recess and glue opposite sides, in turn, using books as weights to push the sides together without distorting the shape of the building.

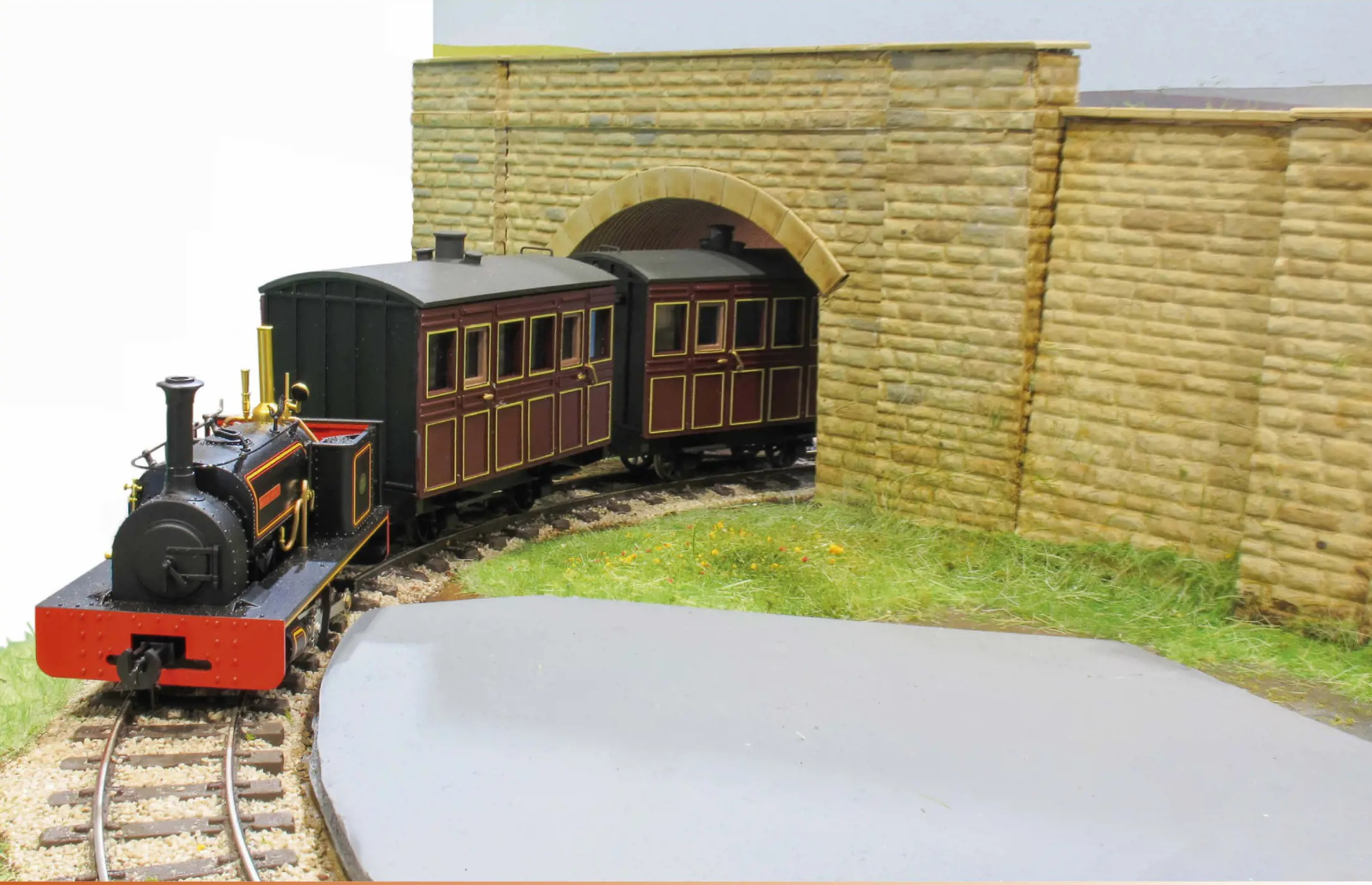


9 The centre floor has tabs and recesses, but these are tricky to use. I created brackets using the window inserts, one in each corner and one in the middle of each side. These aren't too obtrusive if painted to match the floor.

10 I also glued the insert from the roof cap onto the middle of the first floor to strengthen it. The ground floor can be stuck in place using the tabs provided in the kit, and this is much easier to fit than the first floor.

11 If necessary, build up the roof to match the height of the walls by adding more roof packers cut from spare kit cardboard. Add spacers as necessary to make up for any irregularities in the fitting of the roof.

12 Finally, using a mix of household filler, PVA glue and black acrylic paint, carefully render the roof sides to hide any packing from view. Excess material can be wiped off when dry using a damp cloth or painted-over with black acrylic.



Scratch-building a road bridge

Phil Parker

FOR MY latest project, I need a bridge, and there isn't anything suitable on either the kit or ready-to-plant market that will do the job. Scratch-building is the only option. This isn't uncommon. Bridges are designed for a location, and it's unlikely there are many identical examples out in the real world.

This bridge will appear to be made from stone, but really, this is just embossed Plastikard over a structure made of foamboard.

For those that have never used it, foamboard is a sandwich of foam, with card facings, front and back, bought from a craft shop. At 5mm thick, it's fatter than normal card, but incredibly light and easy to cut. For 7mm scale buildings, where you want the walls to have some depth, it's ideal. Properly braced, the models will be quite strong – some people even build railway baseboards out of the stuff.

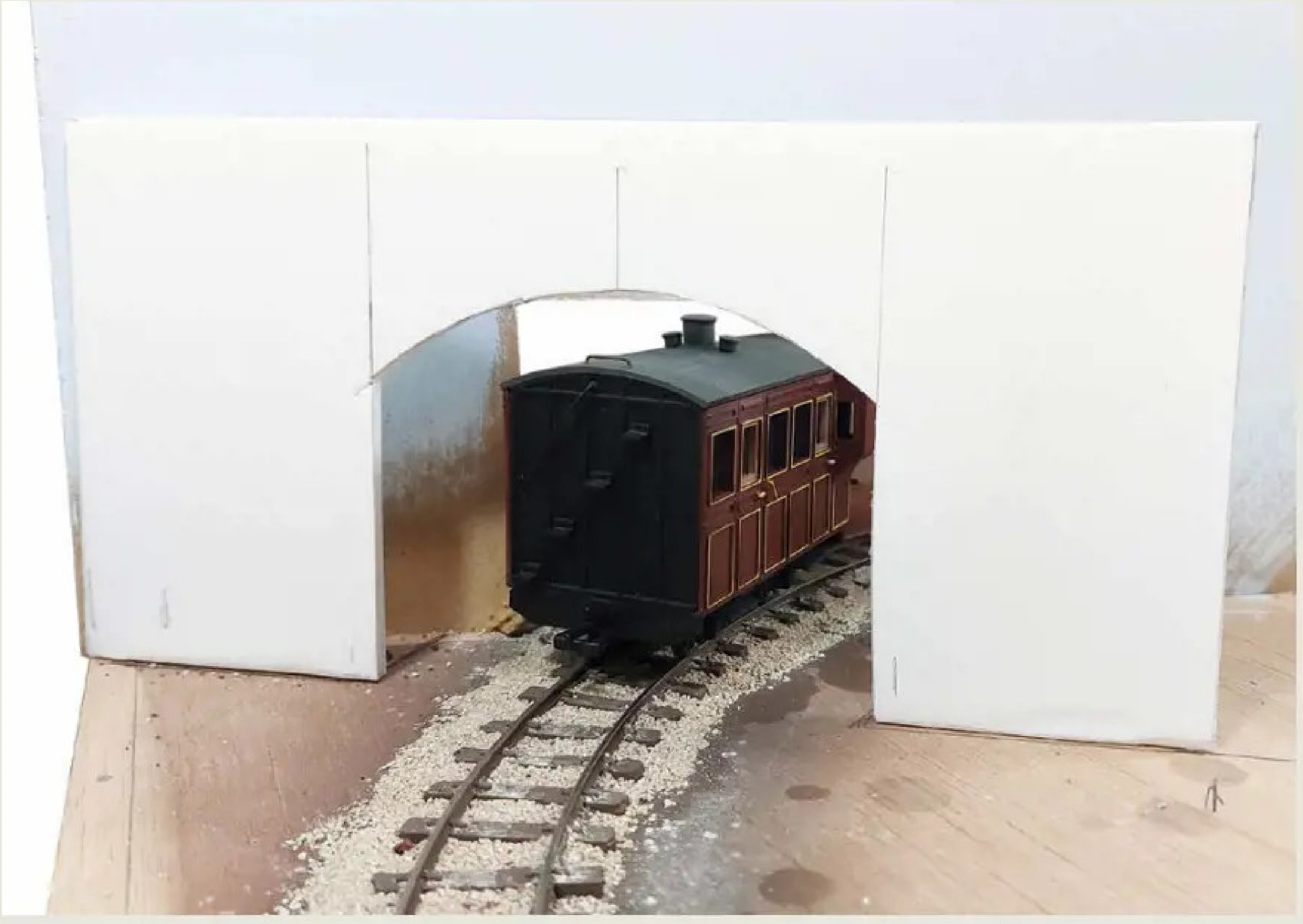
Providing the stone effect is Slater's embossed Plastikard – 7mm scale dressed stone sheet. It's the lumpiest they produce, offering far more texture than you find in the 4mm range. Excellent, but you'll need some filler to deal with the corners. An alternative would be to follow David Wright's hand-scribed method, seen in last year's October issue.

Finally, the big secret. I didn't draw up a plan for this model, instead, I just kept cutting and testing the foamboard pieces in place until they fitted how I wanted them. Then, I stuck it all together with lashings of PVA glue. If that sounds like bodgery, it is, but looking at the finished model, no one can tell, and that's all that matters.

WHAT YOU NEED

Slaters
Dressed stone Plastikard, 1.5mm plain sheet Plastikard

Other
A sheet of foamboard, sharp knife, rule, Olfa cutter, plastic cement and solvent, PVA glue, UHU, epoxy, stone colour paint, brown acrylic, talcum powder, spray primer, brown pencil crayons.

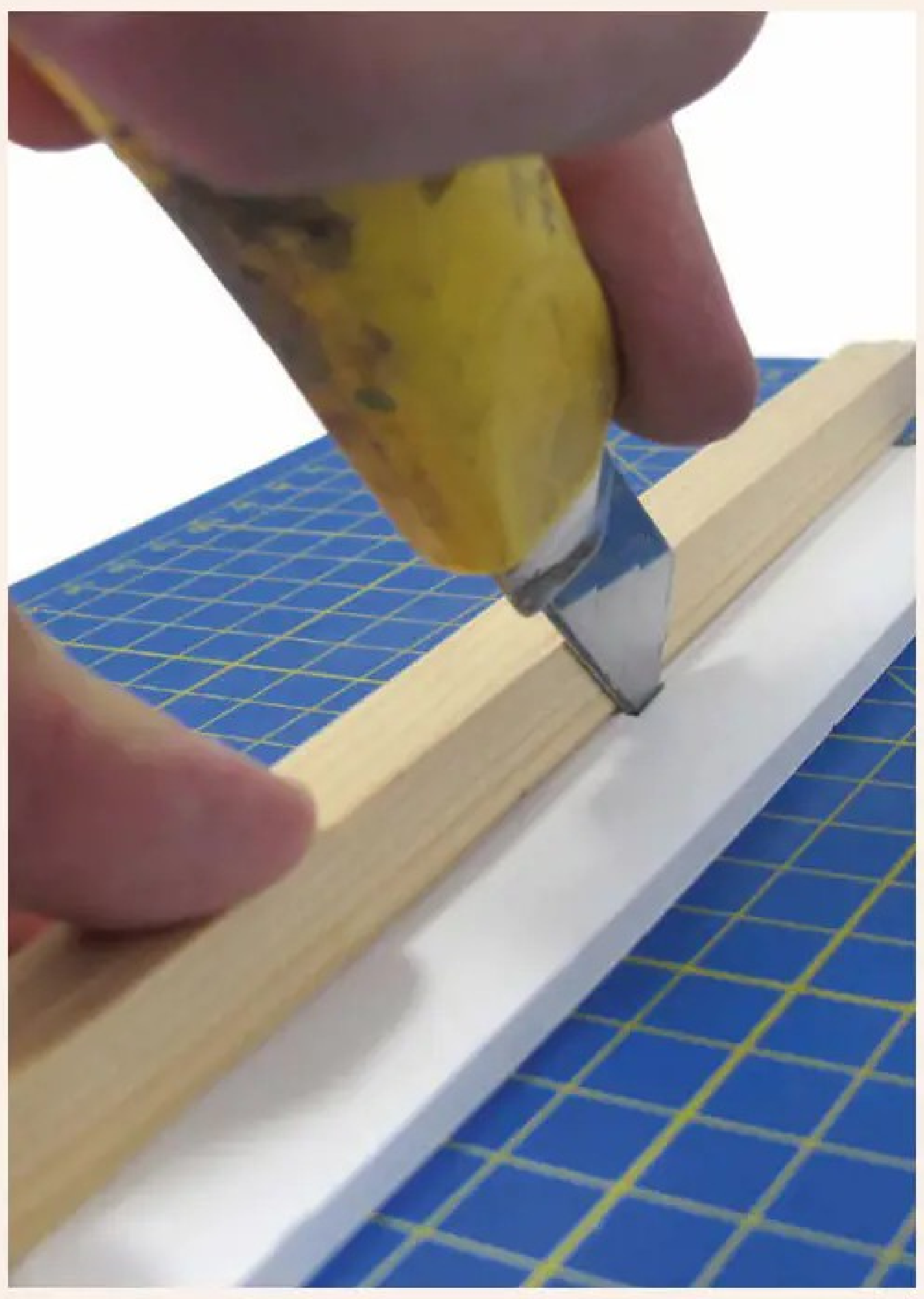


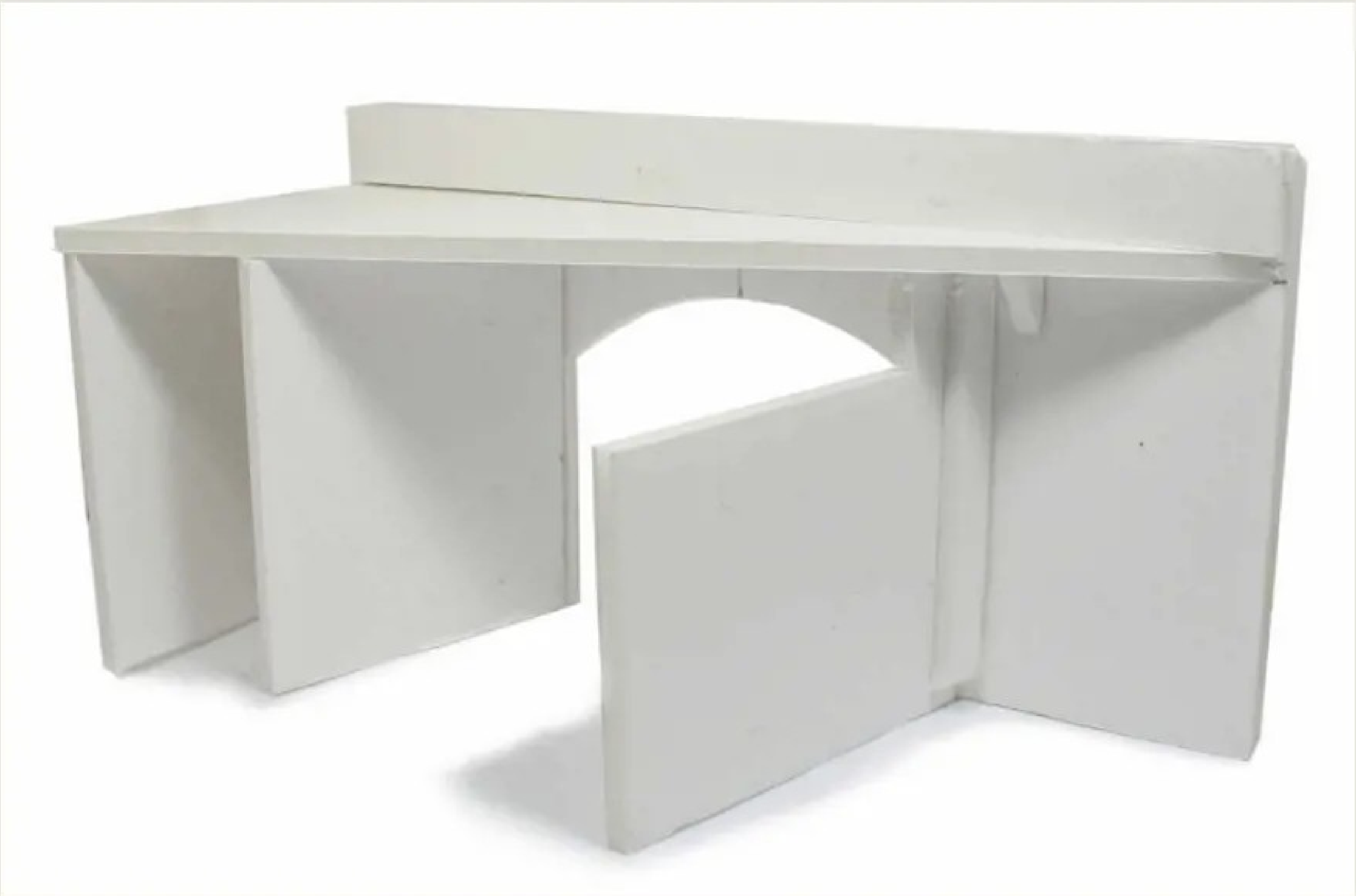
1 The bridge front is cut out from foamboard, ensuring that the coaches will fit underneath. As a guide, this one is 23cm wide and 11.5cm tall. The entrance is 10cm wide and 8cm tall. Yours will be different to fit the site.

CUTTING FOAMBOARD

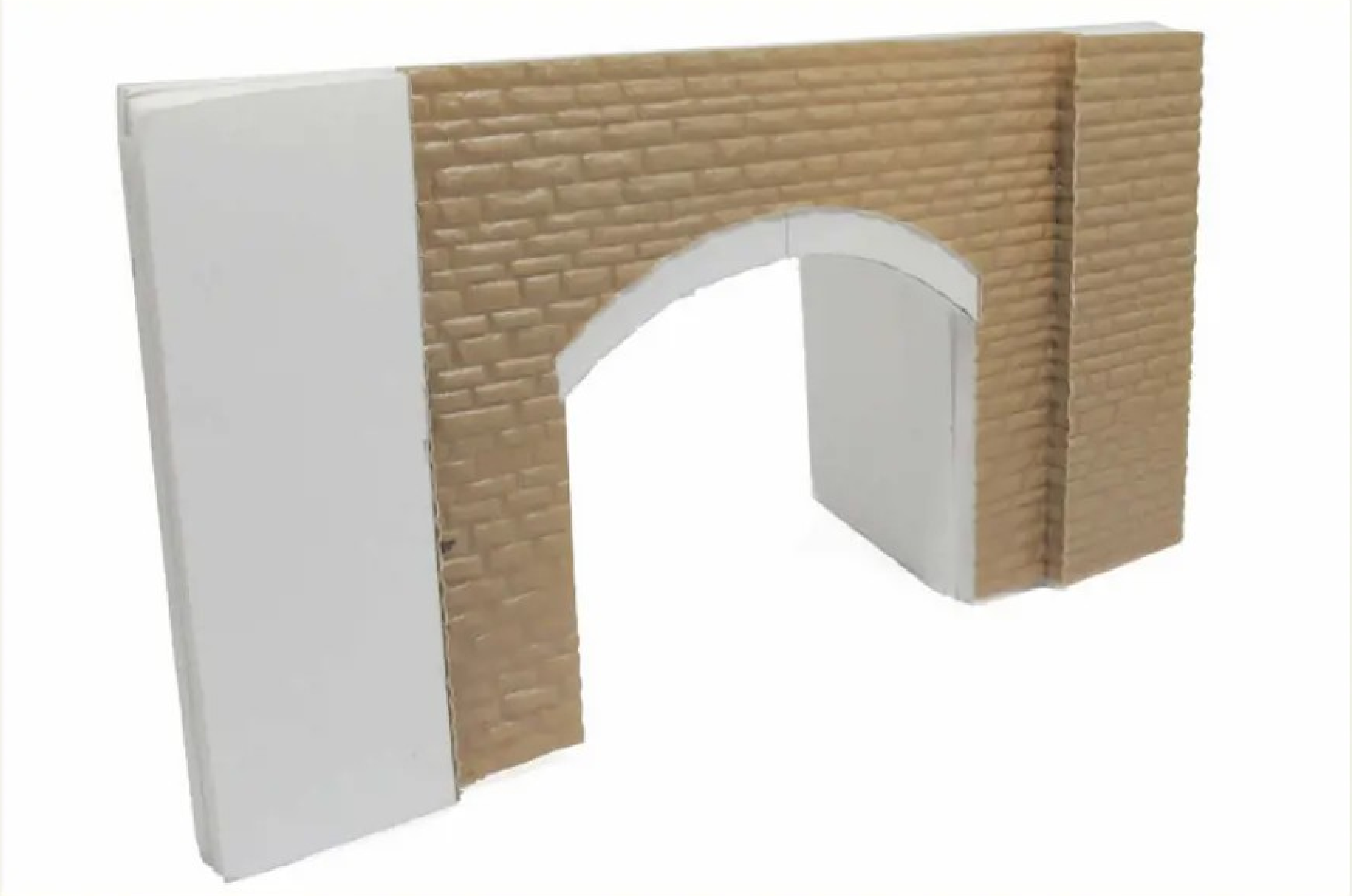
Foamboard cuts easily with a sharp knife, but as it's quite thick, achieving a nice edge at 90 degrees to the top is very difficult, even though for some jobs it's desirable.

My trick is to use a knife whose blade can be extended a long way, and then work with a thick piece of wood as a guide. Hold the blade against this, and it should be perpendicular to the top of the board.

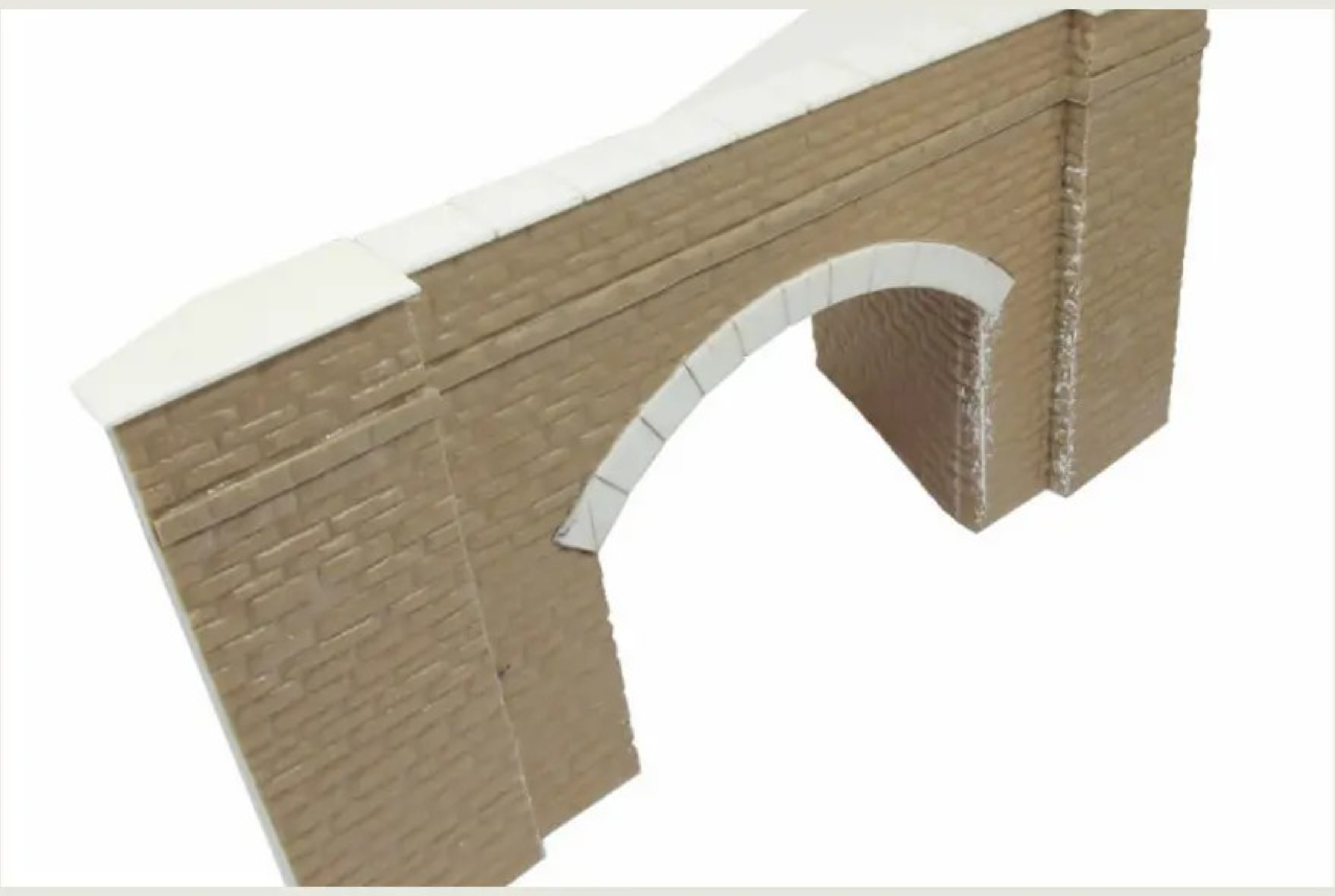




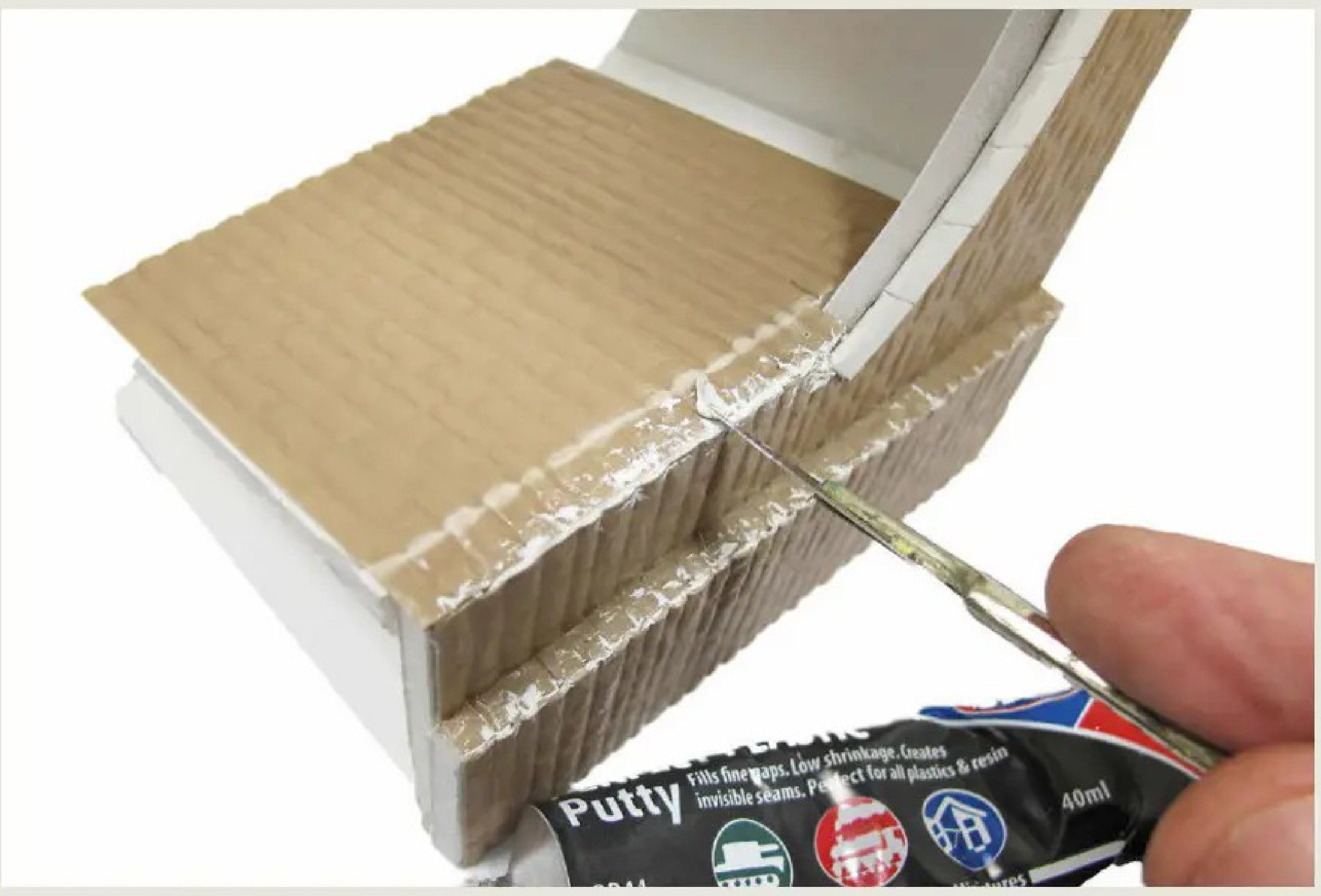
2 I gradually build up the road surface on the top and walls beside the entrance. There's no science to this; simply cut the foamboard until it fits, glue with PVA, and then leave to dry. Check the fit and trim if required.



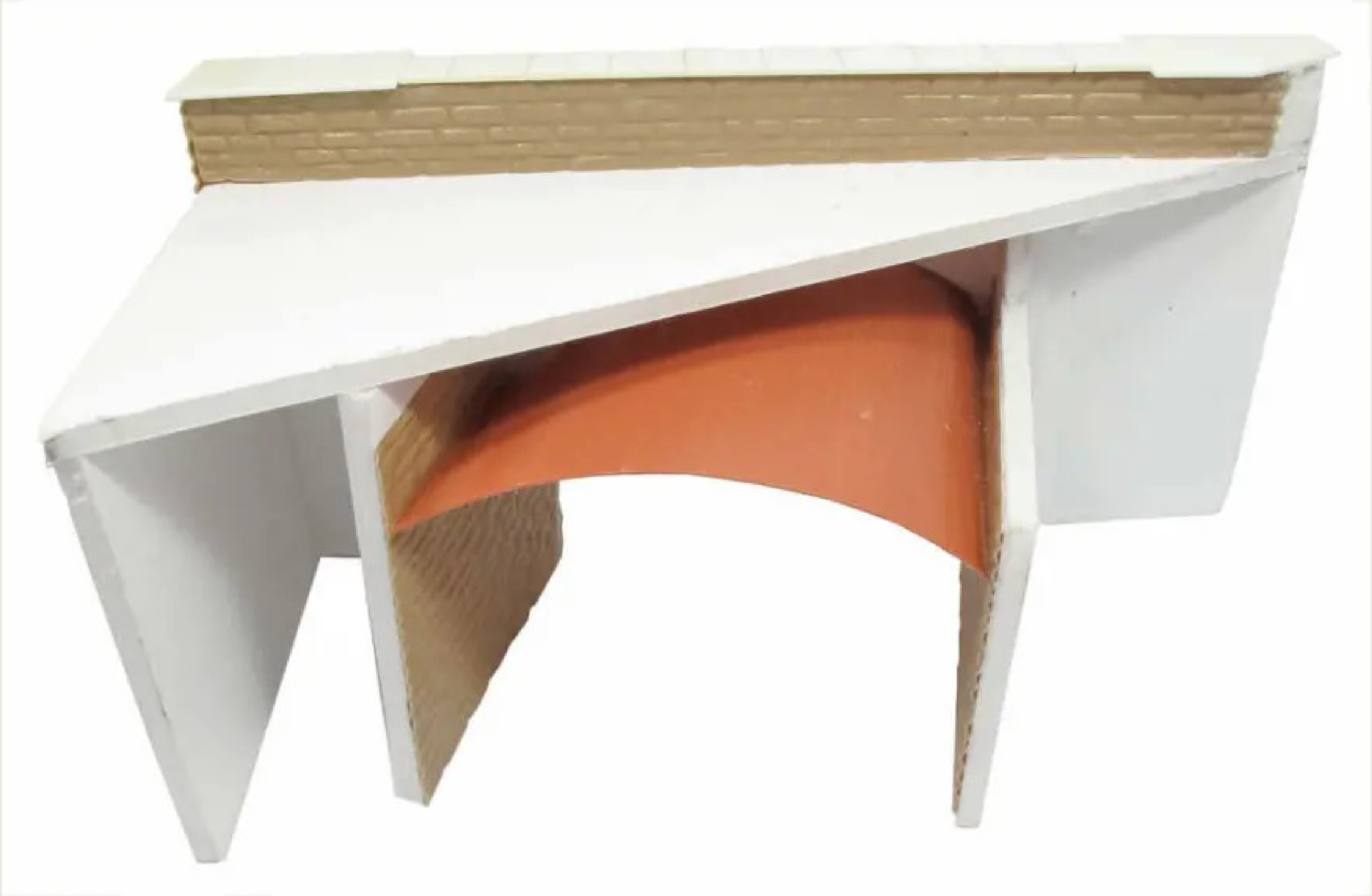
3 Slaters embossed Plastikard, 7mm Dressed Stone, is cut and stuck in place with UHU. I tend to overlap the corners, apply lots of solvent to stick the sheets together, then trim the edges back for a neat fit.



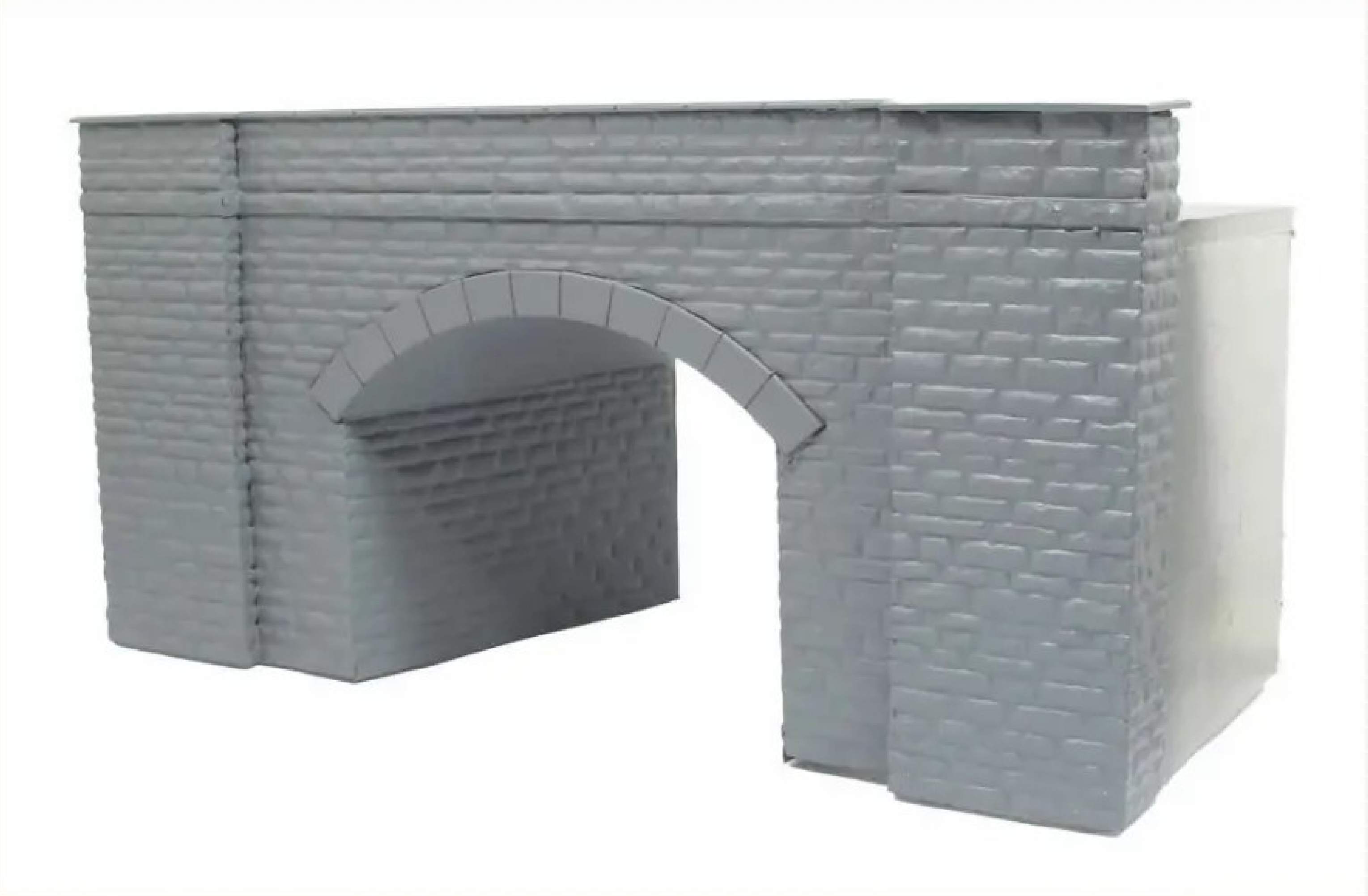
4 Embellishments are added from 1.5mm thick plain Plastikard. In this scale, individual pieces are an option, but I prefer to keep things simple and neat by scribing larger sections with an Olfa cutter.



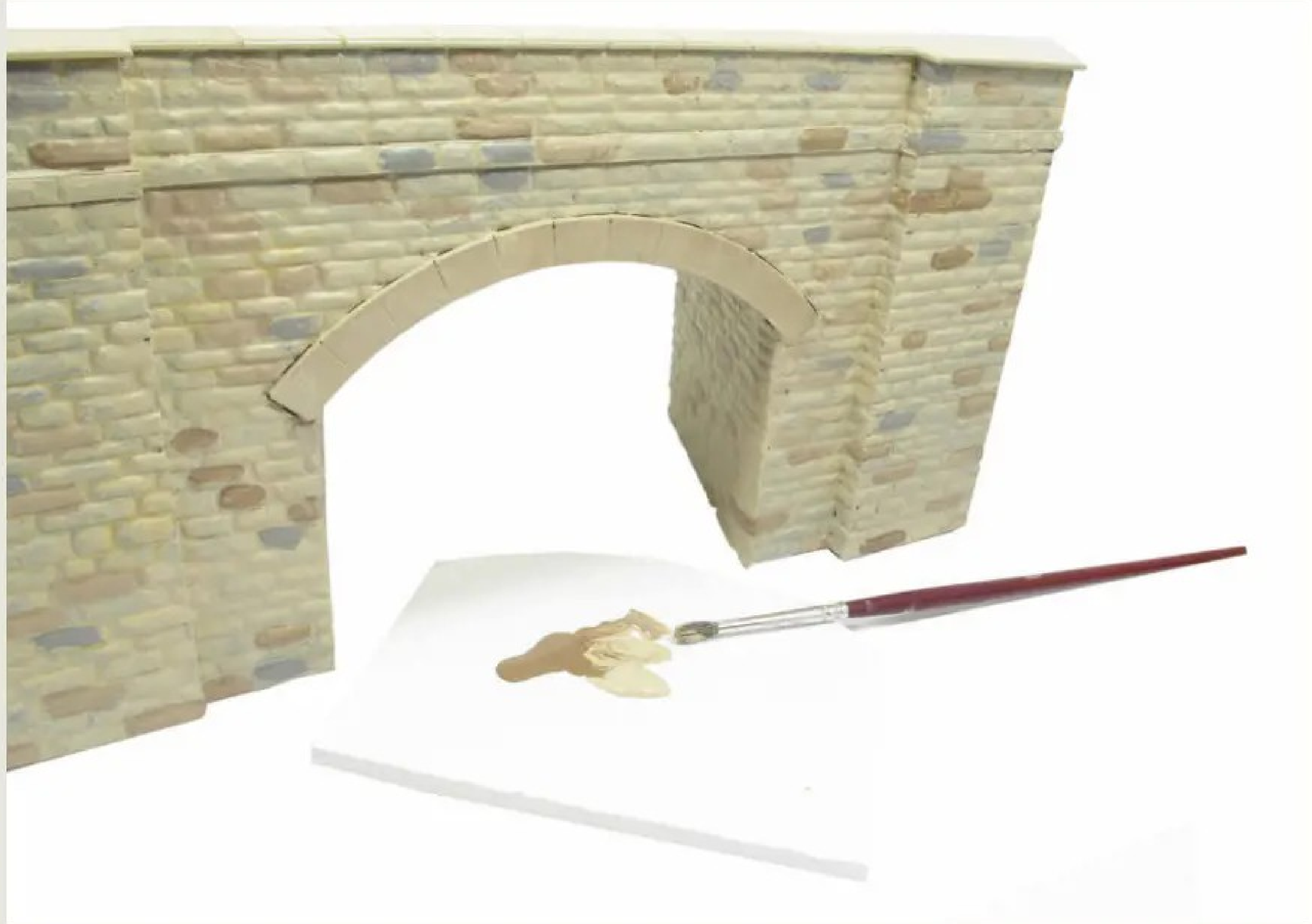
5 Along all the edges, the raised stones will need their sides filled so we don't see down the back of each one. Applying filler with an old knife blade makes it easy to push the stuff where you want it without putting too much on, which will need to be tidied up later.



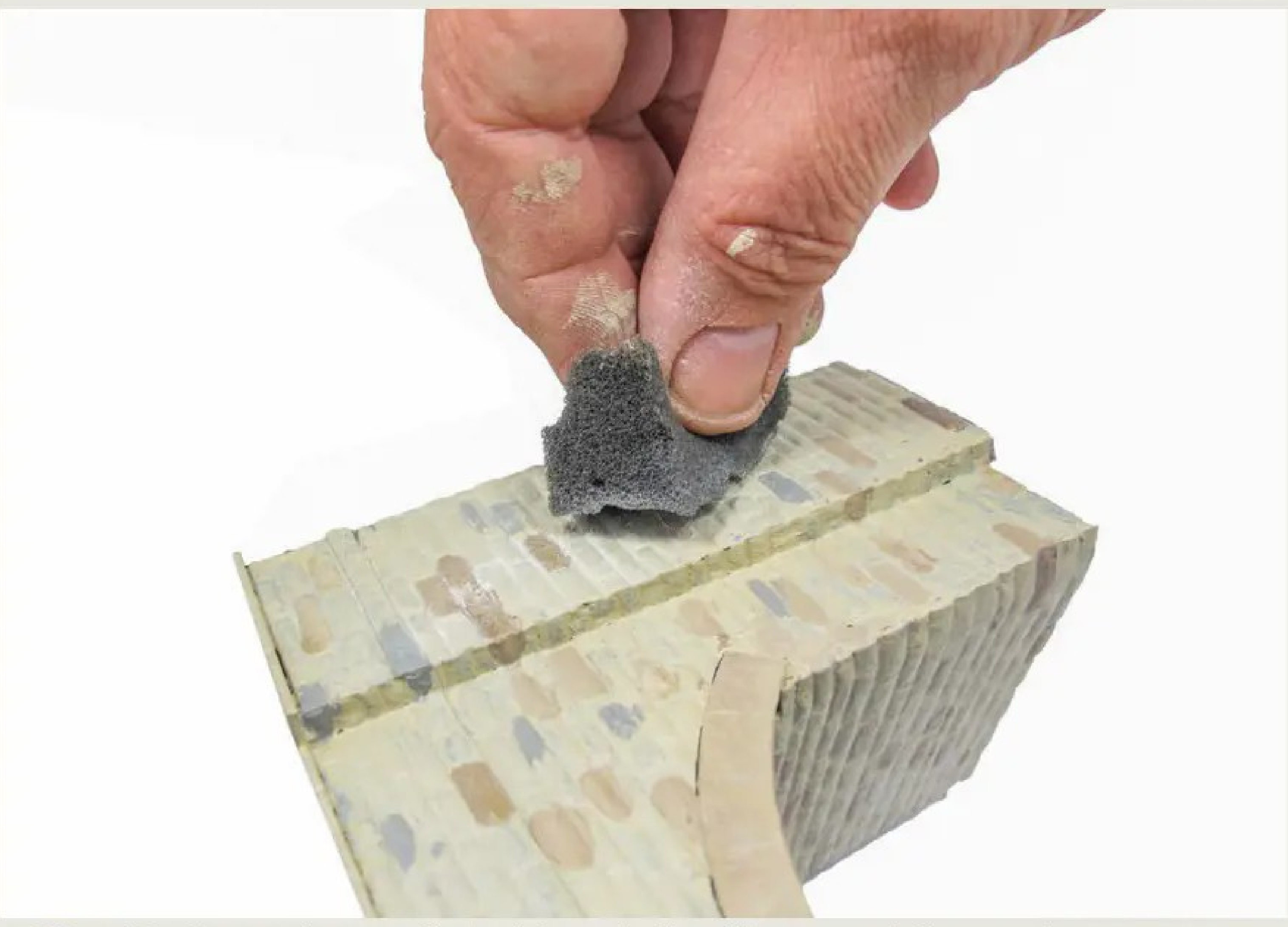
6 Under the arch, I'm using some brick Plastikard, a common feature, because it's easier to form a curve this way. For the modeller, bending a sheet of bricks is easier than the dressed stone! Held in place with plastic cement, I run some cheap epoxy down the back for a solid joint.



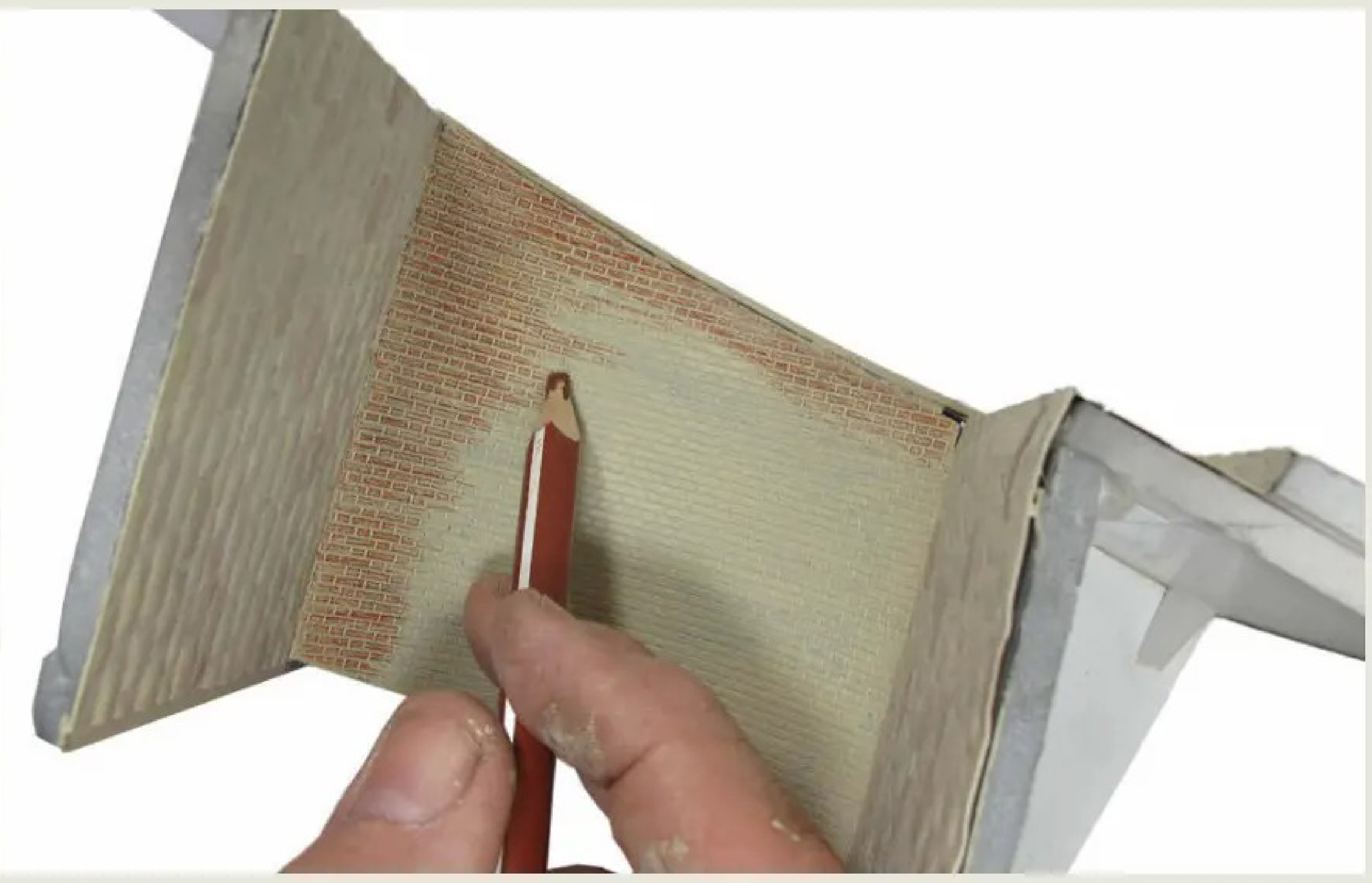
7 A coat of primer sprayed over the model will show areas where more filler or sanding is required. The grey is also an excellent base coat for the final colour and can be allowed to show through slightly.



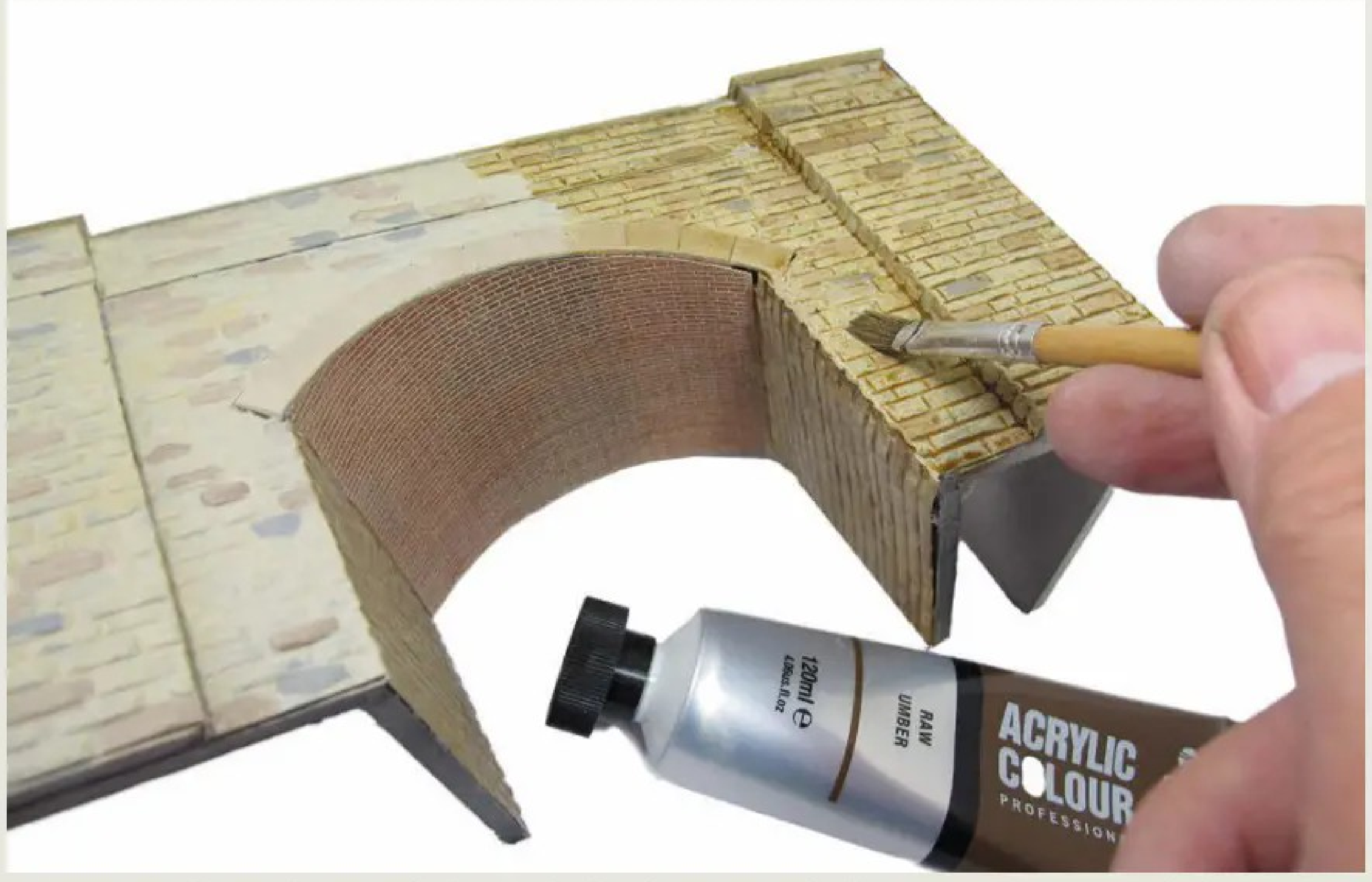
8 The model is given a couple of thinned coats of Humbrol 121 acrylic (121, Pale Stone), and then some individual stones are picked out with a mix of this - 118 (US Tan) and Vallejo 161 (London Grey).



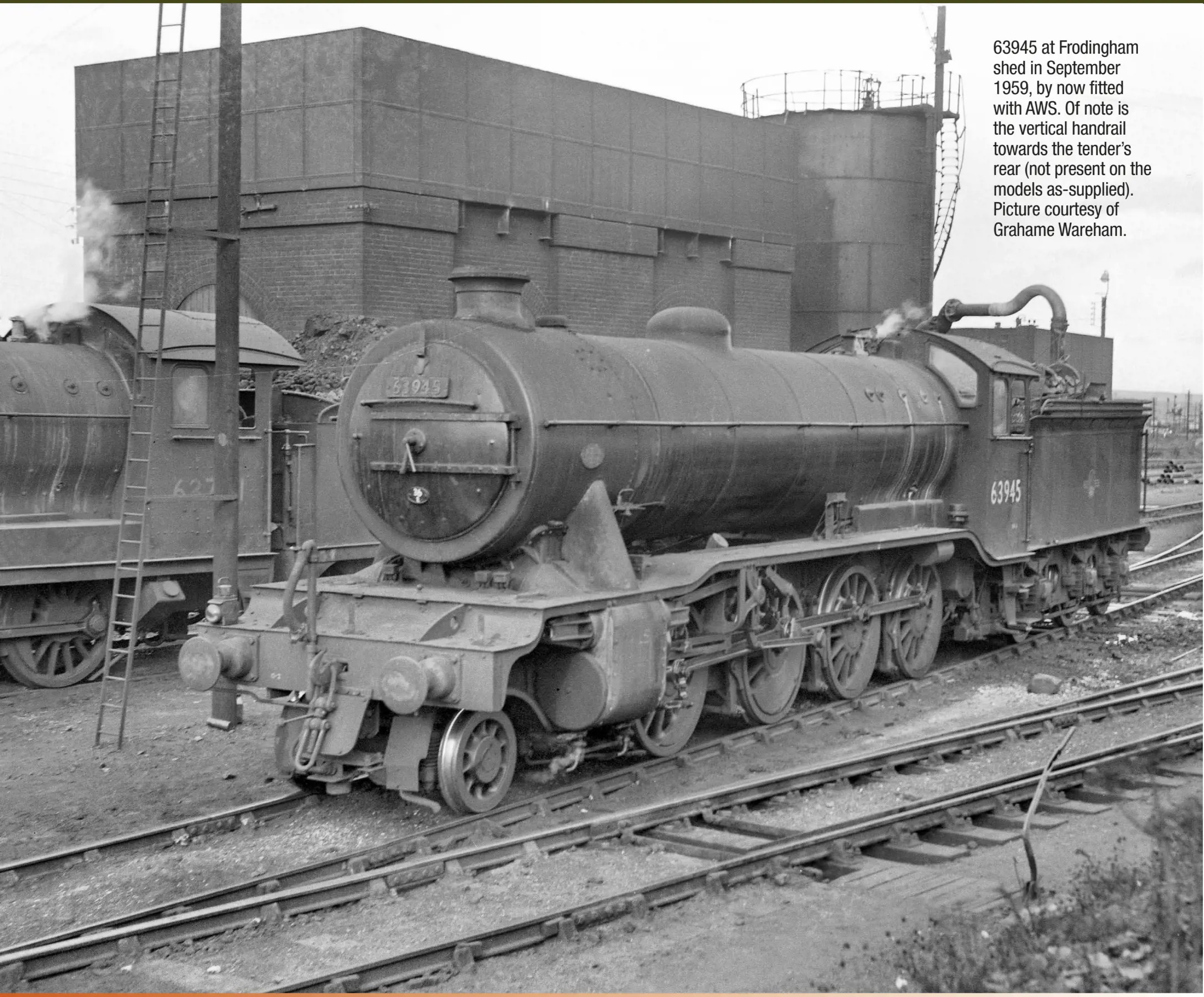
9 Before the paint dries fully, I'm working talcum powder into the surface. This ensures the paint is fully matt, blends the colours, and gives the plastic a little texture.



10 Under the arch, the bricks are coloured with a reddish-brown pencil crayon over fully-dry (leave it overnight) Humbrol 121. Try to use a couple of different pencils over the entire area as this gives a random effect to the brick colours.



11 Another night of drying and the entire model is washed over with acrylic paint from an art shop, thinned with water. Finally, I'll dab more talc into this as it dries to add texture and remove any sheen. Sometimes, this needs to be done twice to build up the effect.



63945 at Frodingham shed in September 1959, by now fitted with AWS. Of note is the vertical handrail towards the tender's rear (not present on the models as-supplied). Picture courtesy of Grahame Wareham.

Modifications to Heljan's latest 02/2 and 02/4 Tangos

Tony Wright

I MENTIONED in the recent BRM WoR/subscribers' video showing Heljan's latest (and much-improved) Gresley Tango 2-8-0s that I'd be conducting a few 'modifications/improvements' to this latest pair (not that there's anything fundamentally wrong – just 'personalising, really). I did a similar thing when the earlier manifestations appeared.

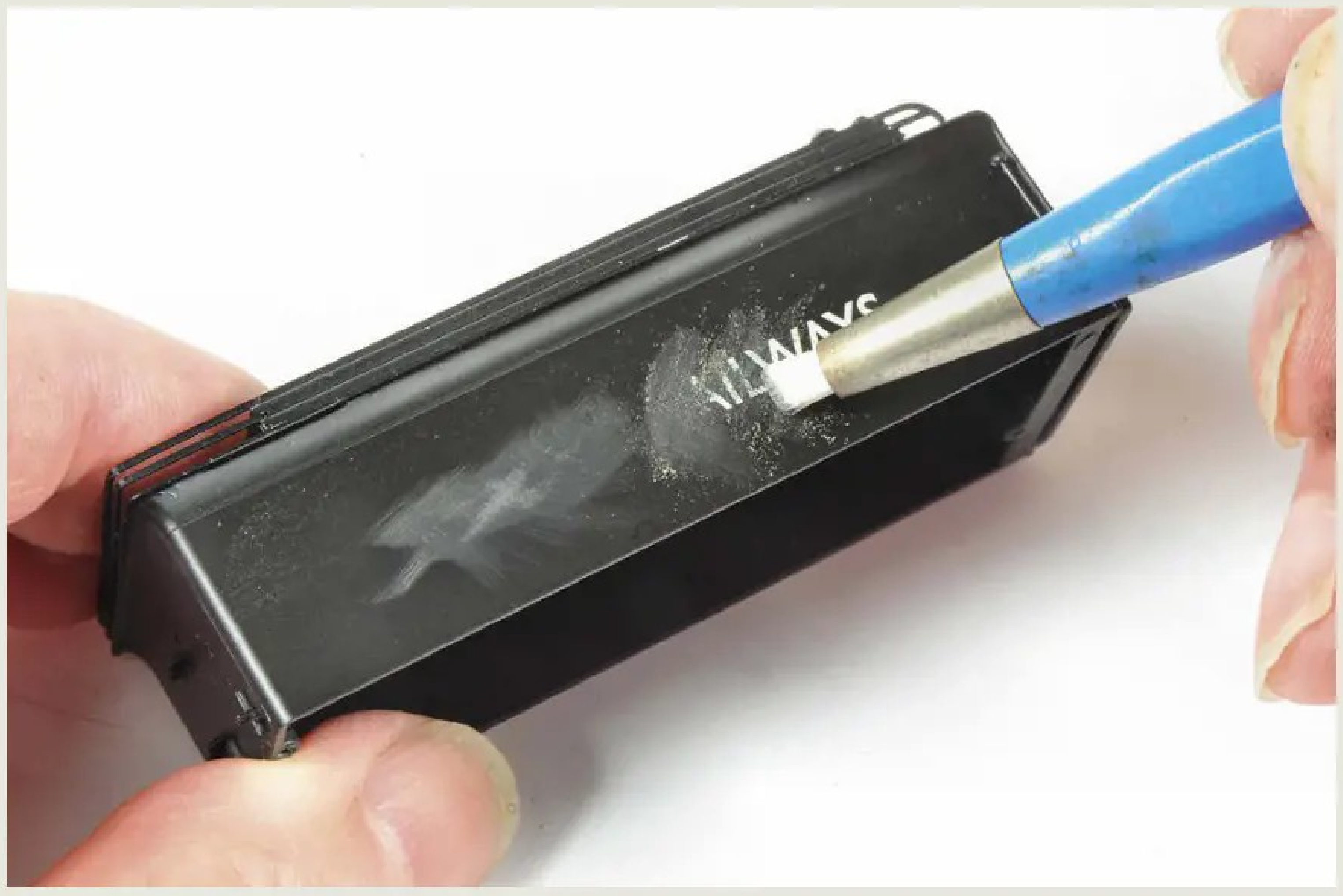
WHAT YOU NEED

Alan Gibson
Handrail pillars

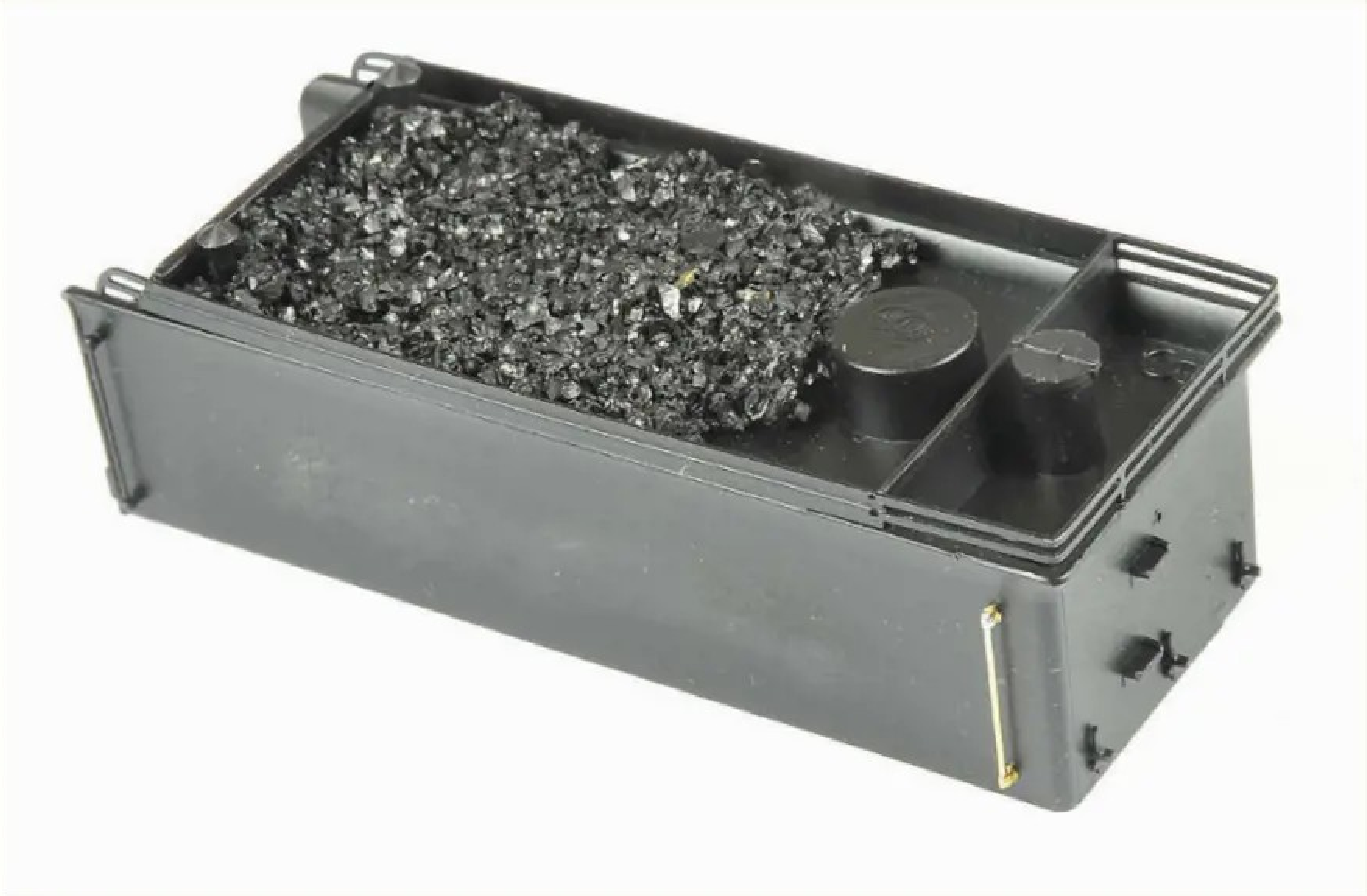
Heljan
Class O2/2 'Tango'
BR black No. 63938
Class O2/4 'Tango'
BR black No. 63945

Other
Fibreglass propelling pencil, acrylic car rattle can, enamel paints, wire, coal

Class 02/2 'Tango' BR black No. 63938



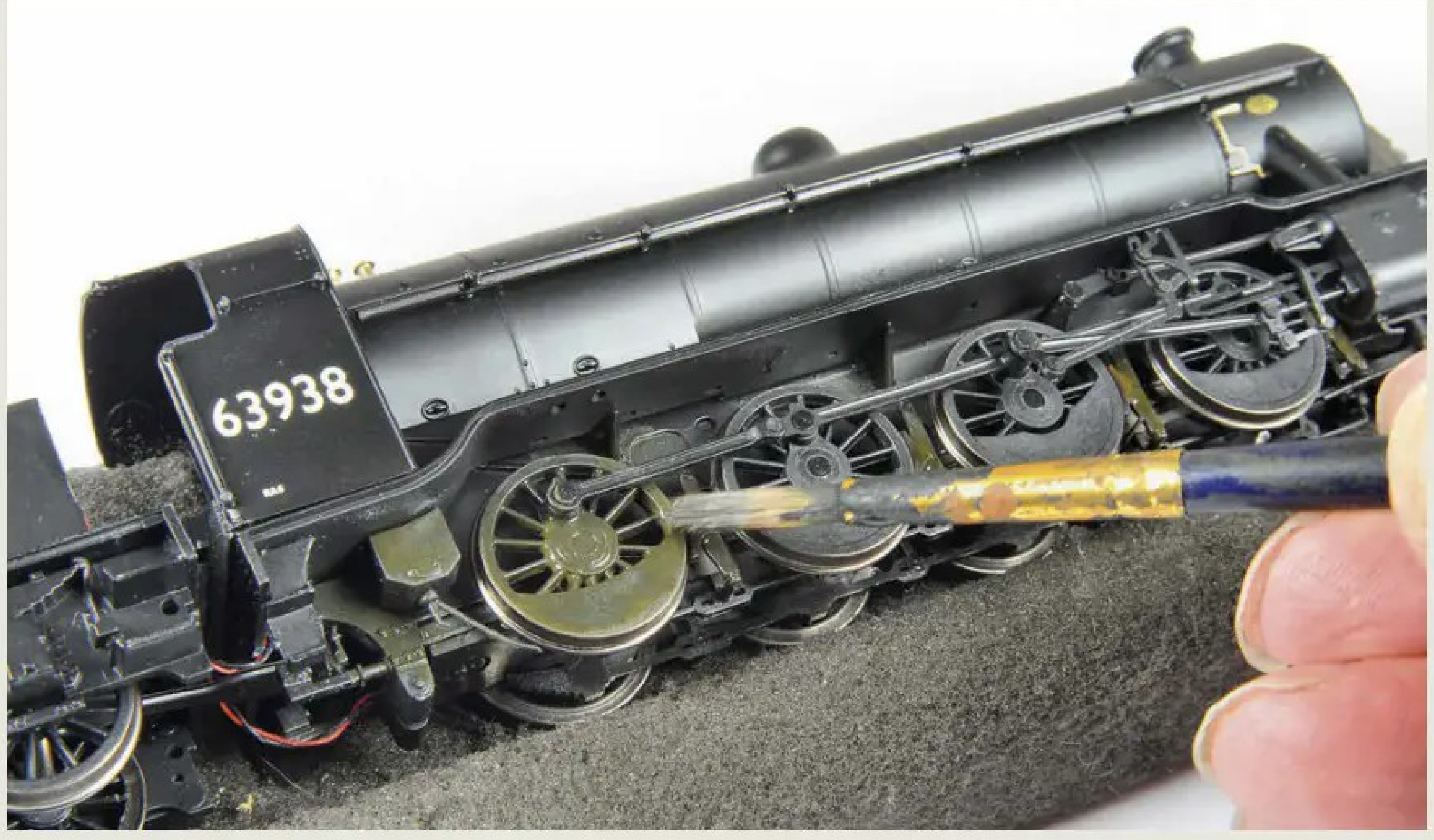
1 As mentioned in my review, I thought the 'British Railways' branding on the tender was a bit big, but for my period, I wanted to change it anyway. Removal was easy with a fibreglass propelling pencil (note that the tender is painted, not just black plastic).



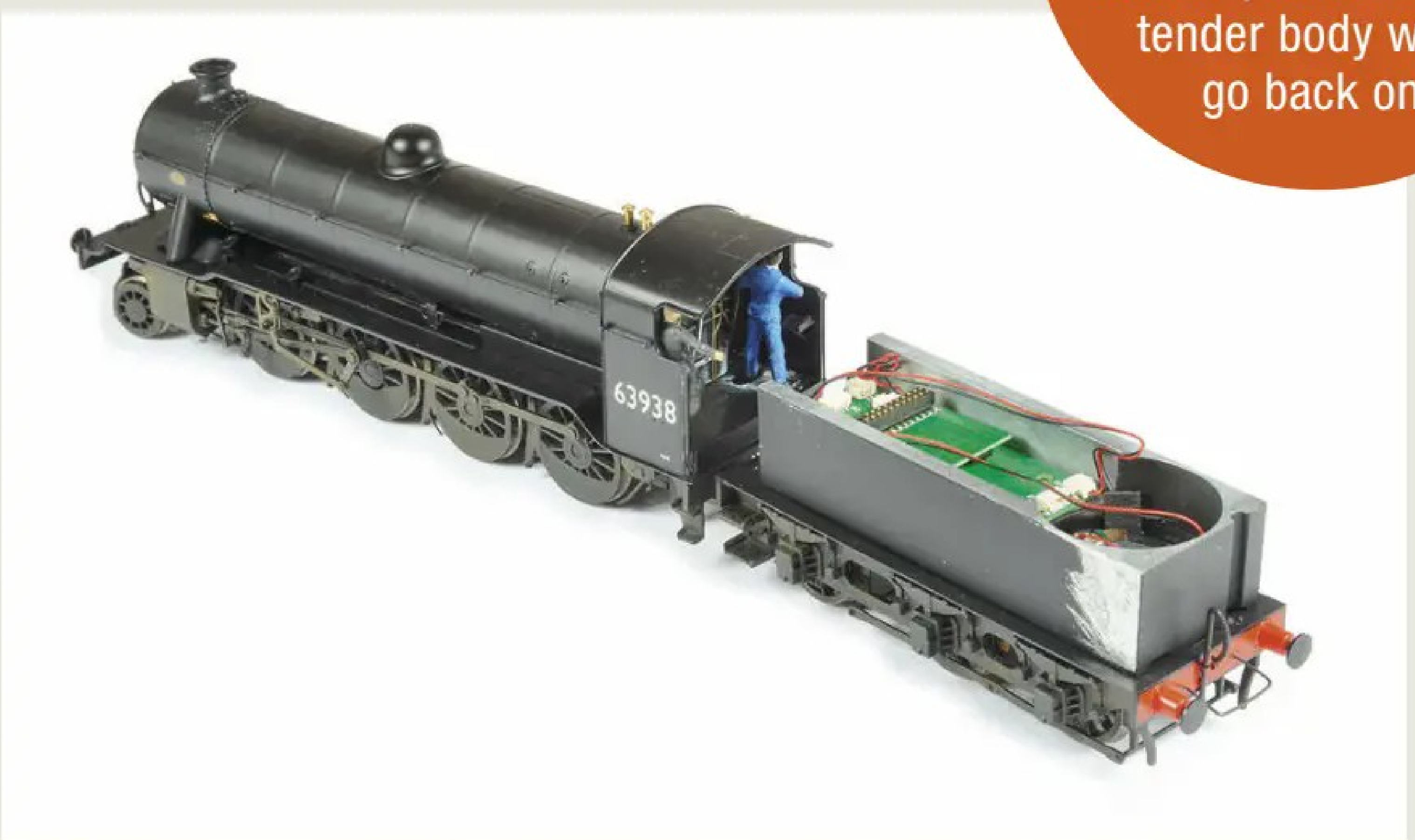
2 With the wording removed on both sides, I then added the necessary extra handrail towards the tender's rear on this side – attached during the war to all O2/1s and O2/2s. This was made using Alan Gibson short handrail pillars and .45mm wire.

TOP TIP

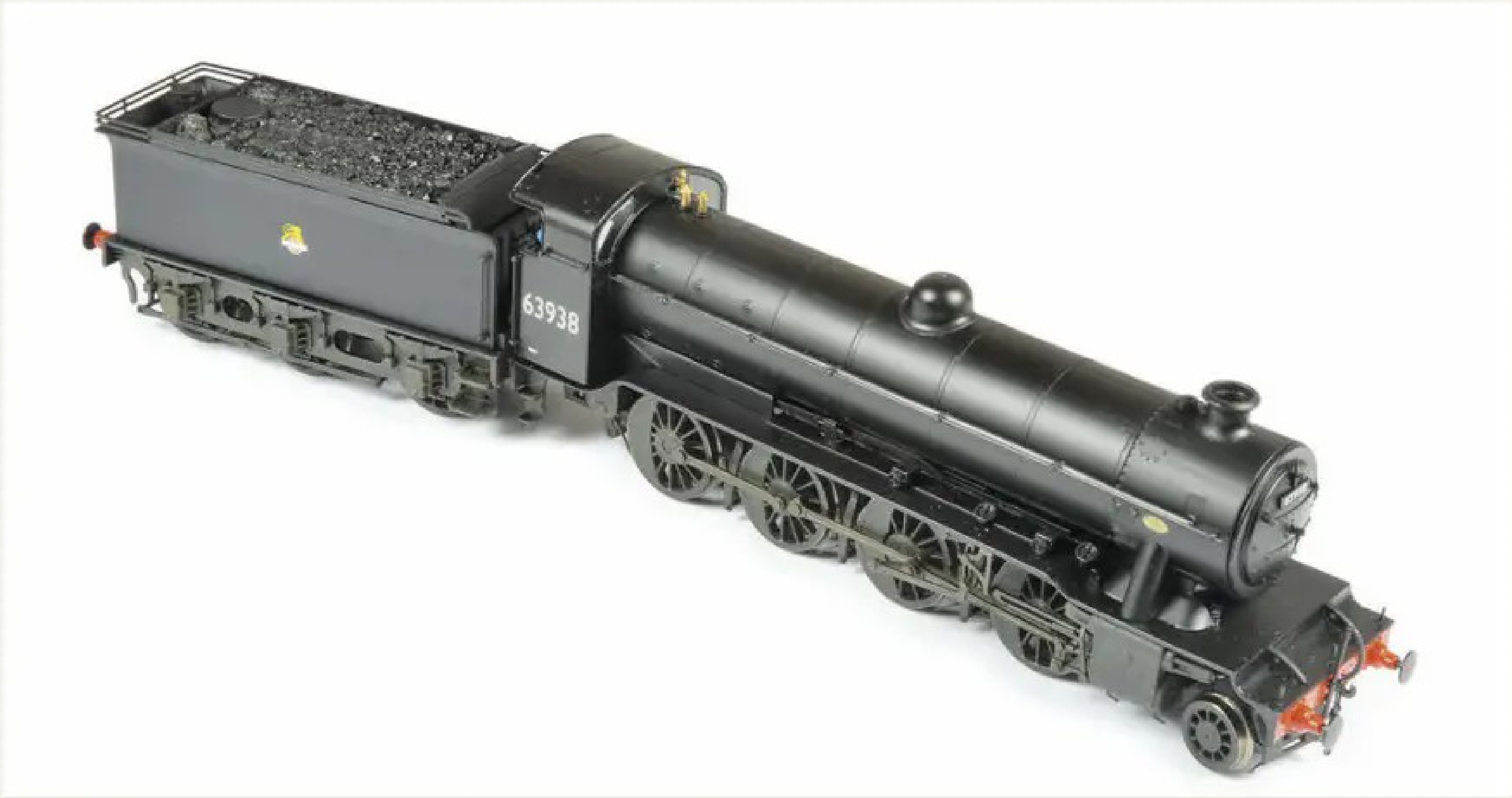
File down the internal ends of the pillars once the superglue has set, otherwise the tender body won't go back on.



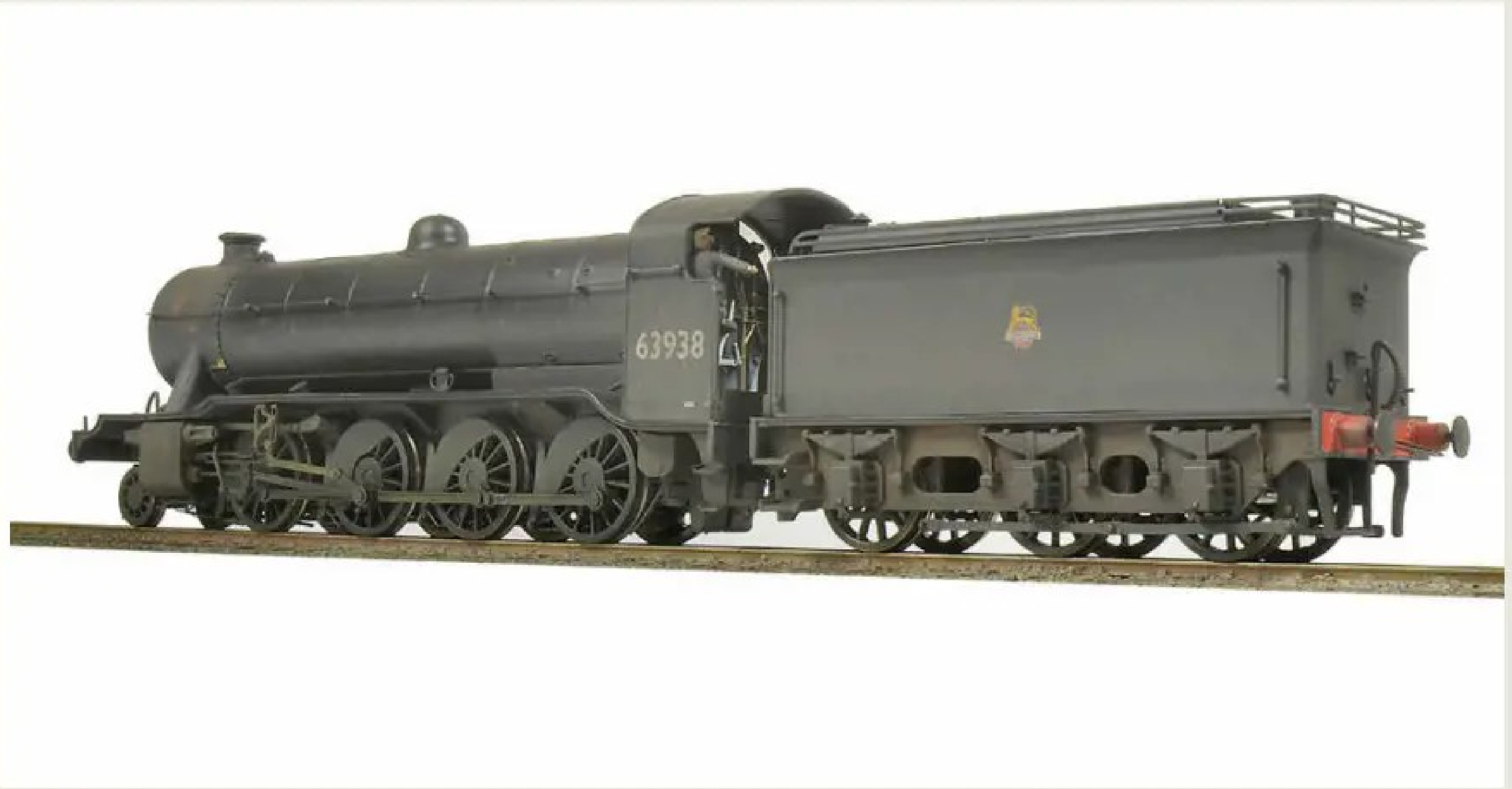
3 Although chemically blackened, the wheels and motion needed more weathering to really convince, here applied by a sable using matt black and matt brown enamels – dabs of each at a time, starting with brown.



4 The under-pinnings already look better for weathering, and a crew has been added. I filed a little off the tender block to ease the body back on after I'd added the extra handrail. A speaker is fitted as standard, though it only works on DCC.



5 Ready now for overall weathering. I sprayed the tender body with Halfords acrylic car rattle can, satin black, and added the earlier BR totem (Pressfix). I also added extra (real) coal, though the supplied load is the best I've seen in an RTR tender.



6 I handed over the modified model to Geoff Haynes to produce his usual wonderful weathering, and here's the result. I really must add a Grantham shedplate and, perhaps, a tablet catcher on the LH side of the tender for working the High Dyke branch.

16T
B 64480
63938

Now in service on my 'Little Bytham' layout, hauling a typical working.

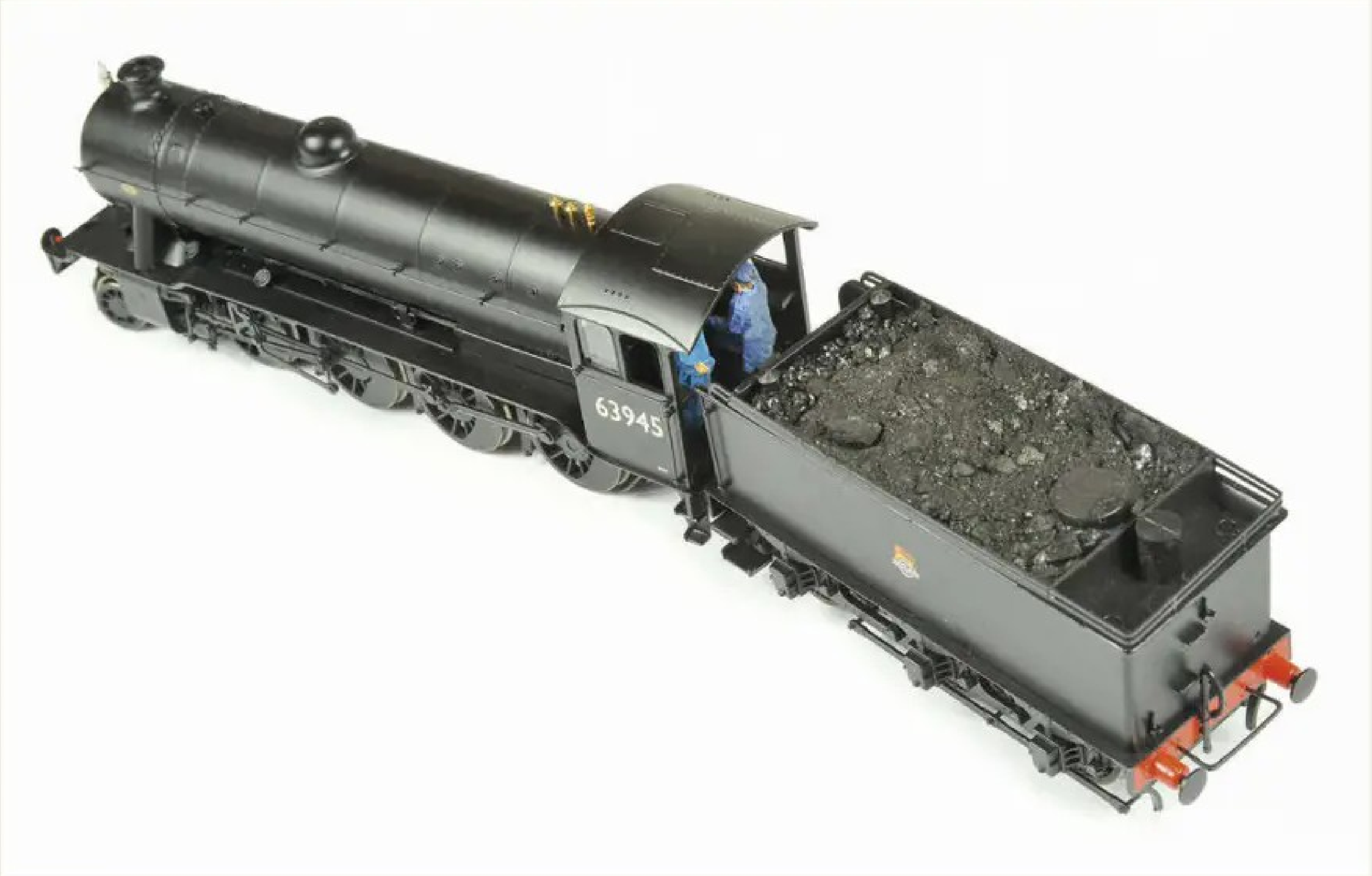
See 'Heljans Tangos' in action

If you'd like to see them 'in the flesh', they'll be on my demonstration stand at the Doncaster Show. They'll also appear in this finished guise in a short video at World of Railways.
For more information visit: www.doncastermodelrail.co.uk

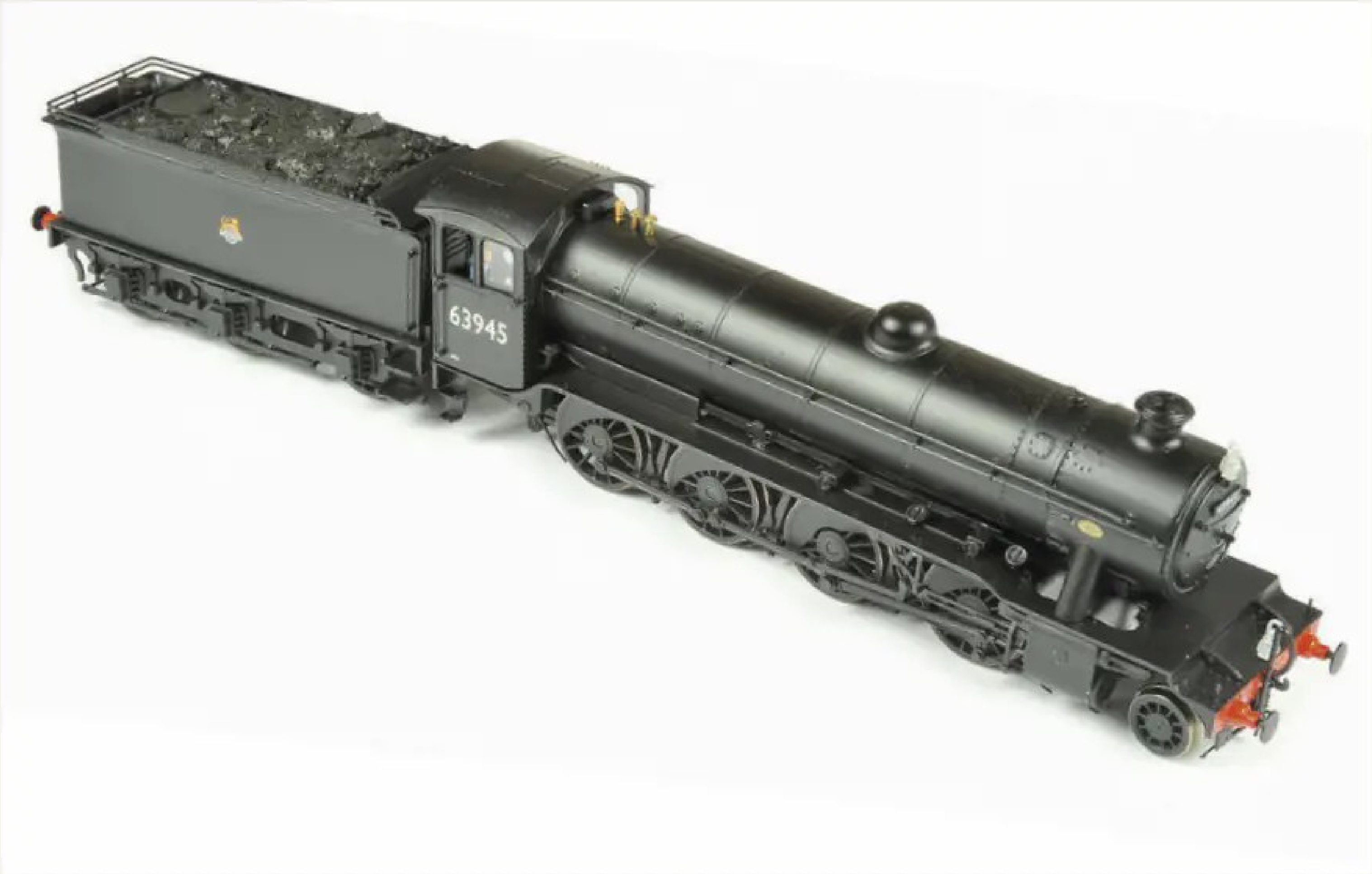
THE FESTIVAL OF BRITISH RAILWAY MODELLING
8th - 9th February 2025
DONCASTER

63938 plods northwards though 'Little Bytham' with empties for Colwick Yard (Nottingham). Its train was over 70 wagons long!

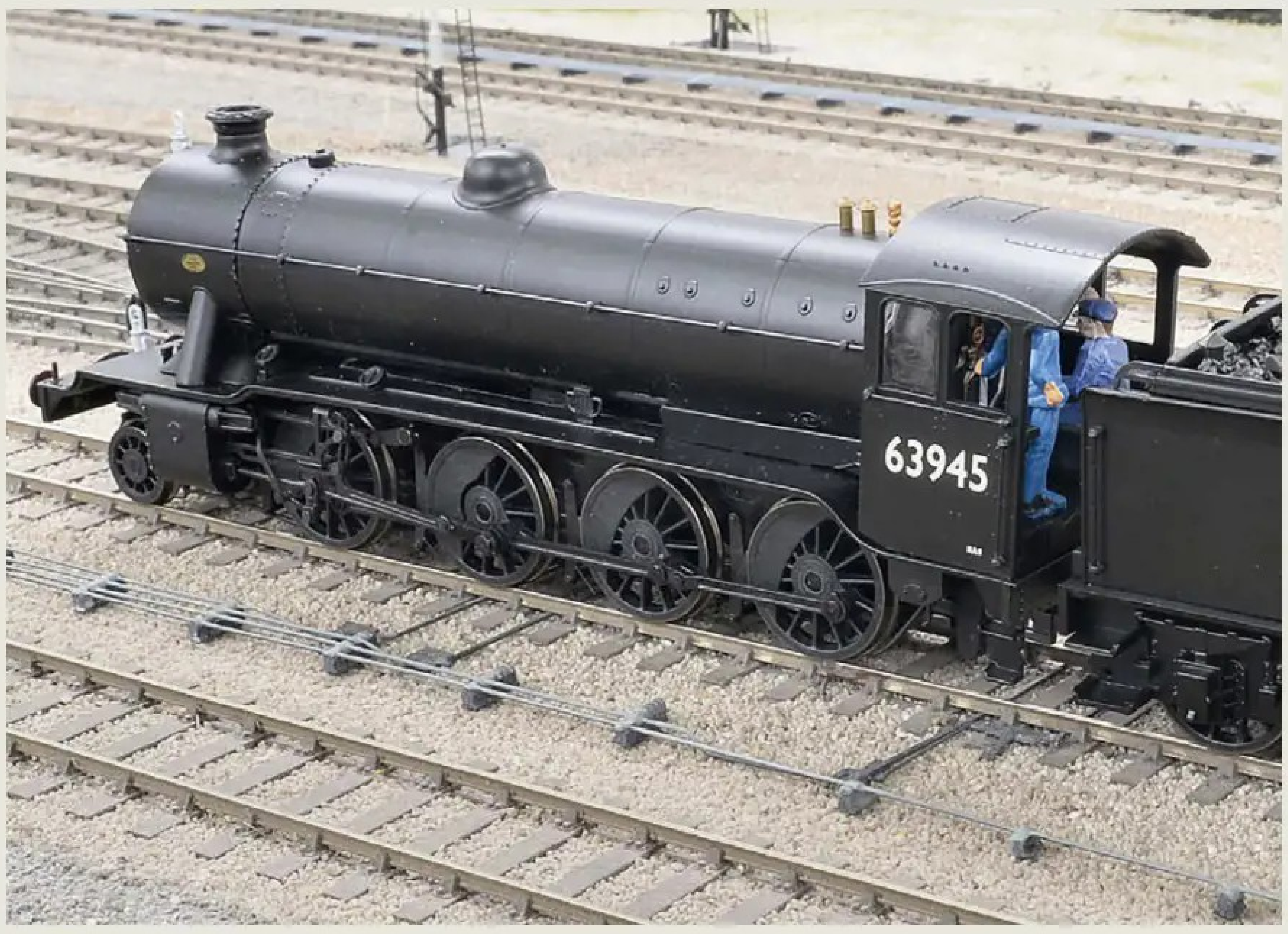
Class 02/4 'Tango' BR black No. 63945



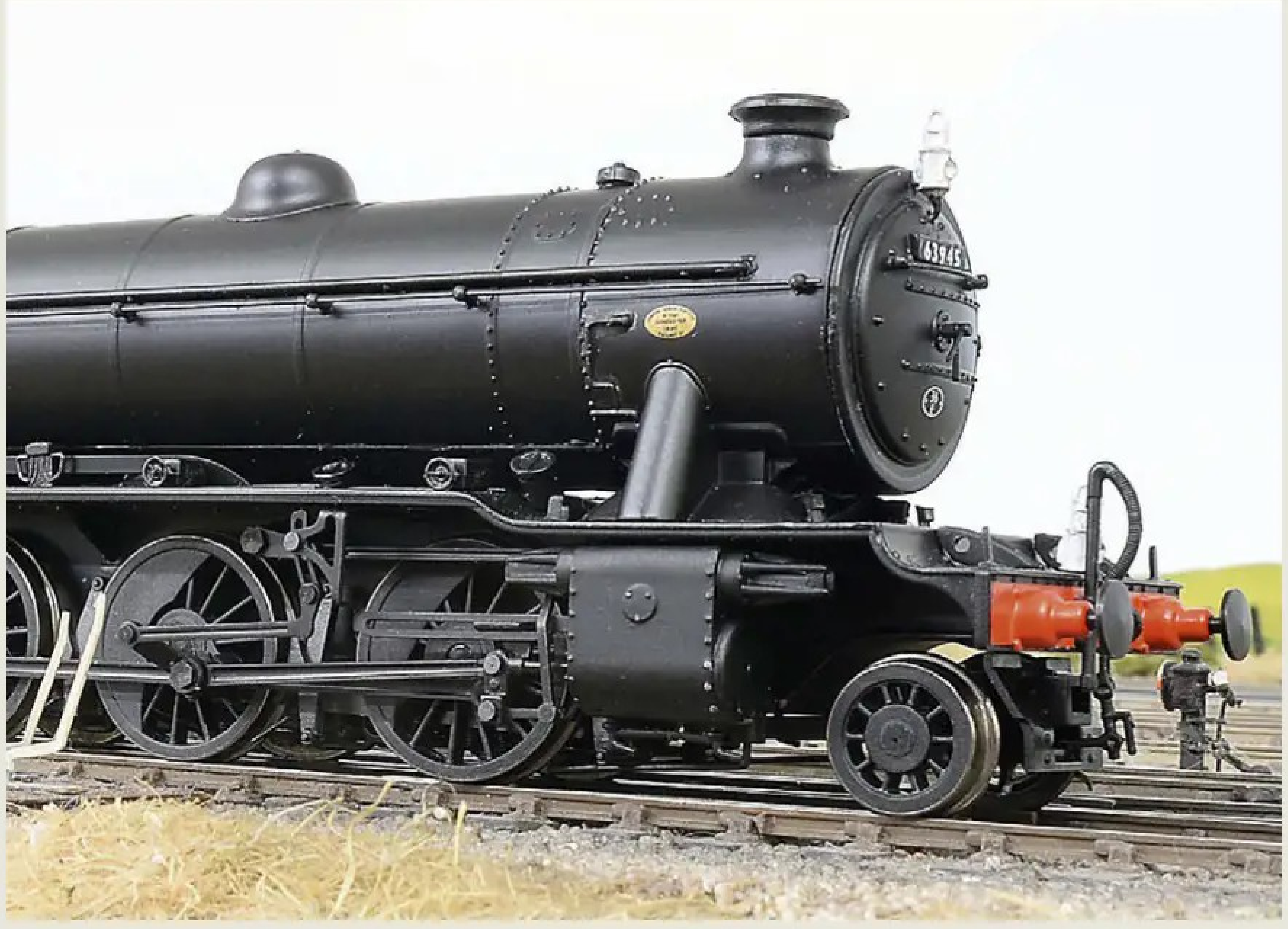
1 Extra coal added, as well as a crew, but I've yet to fit the extra handrail on this tender (note my Sprat & Winkle-style coupling 'goalpost' on the buffer beam).



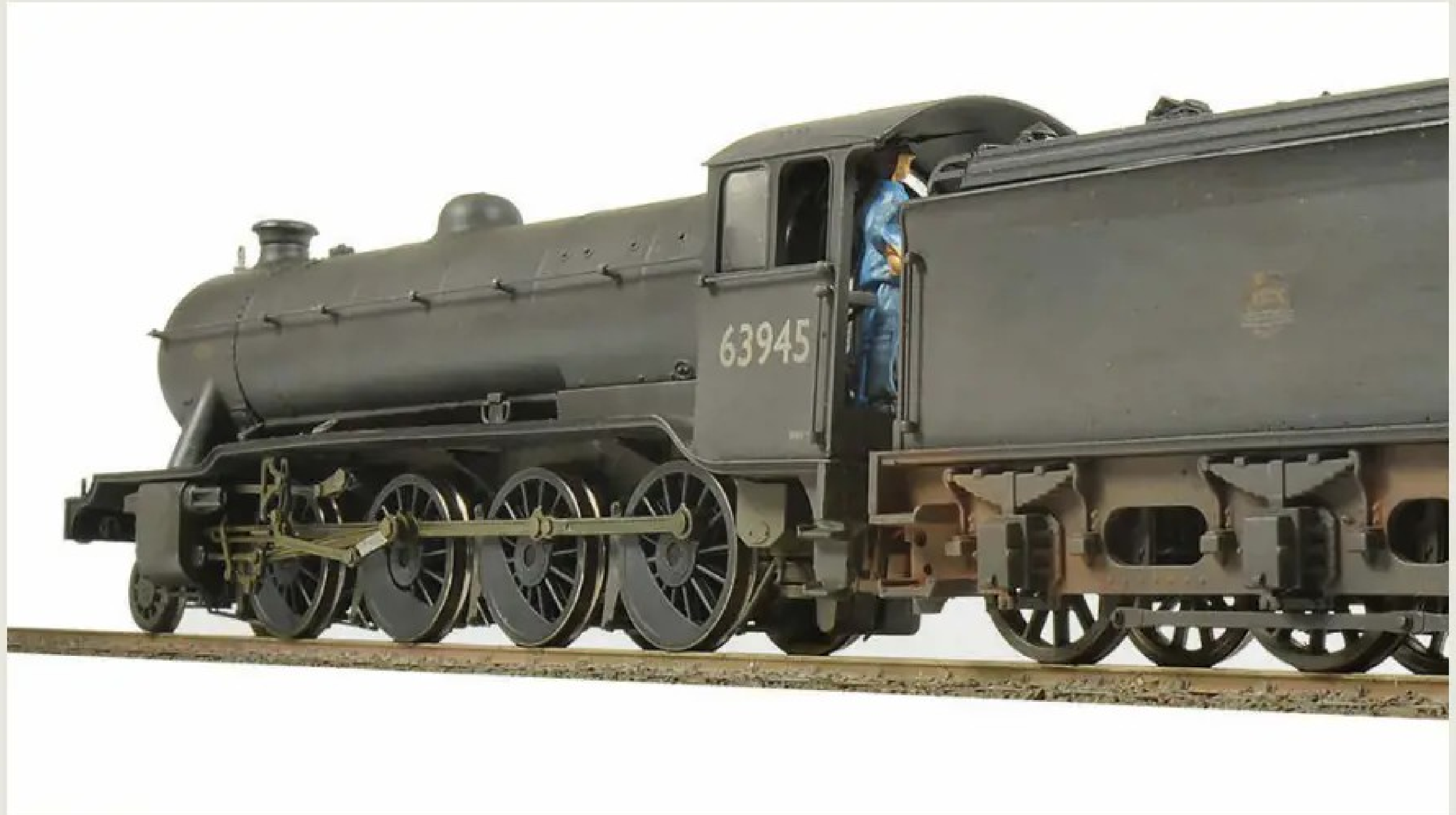
2 The next job was to paint over the 'brass' finish to the conduits on the smokebox, I then added lamps.



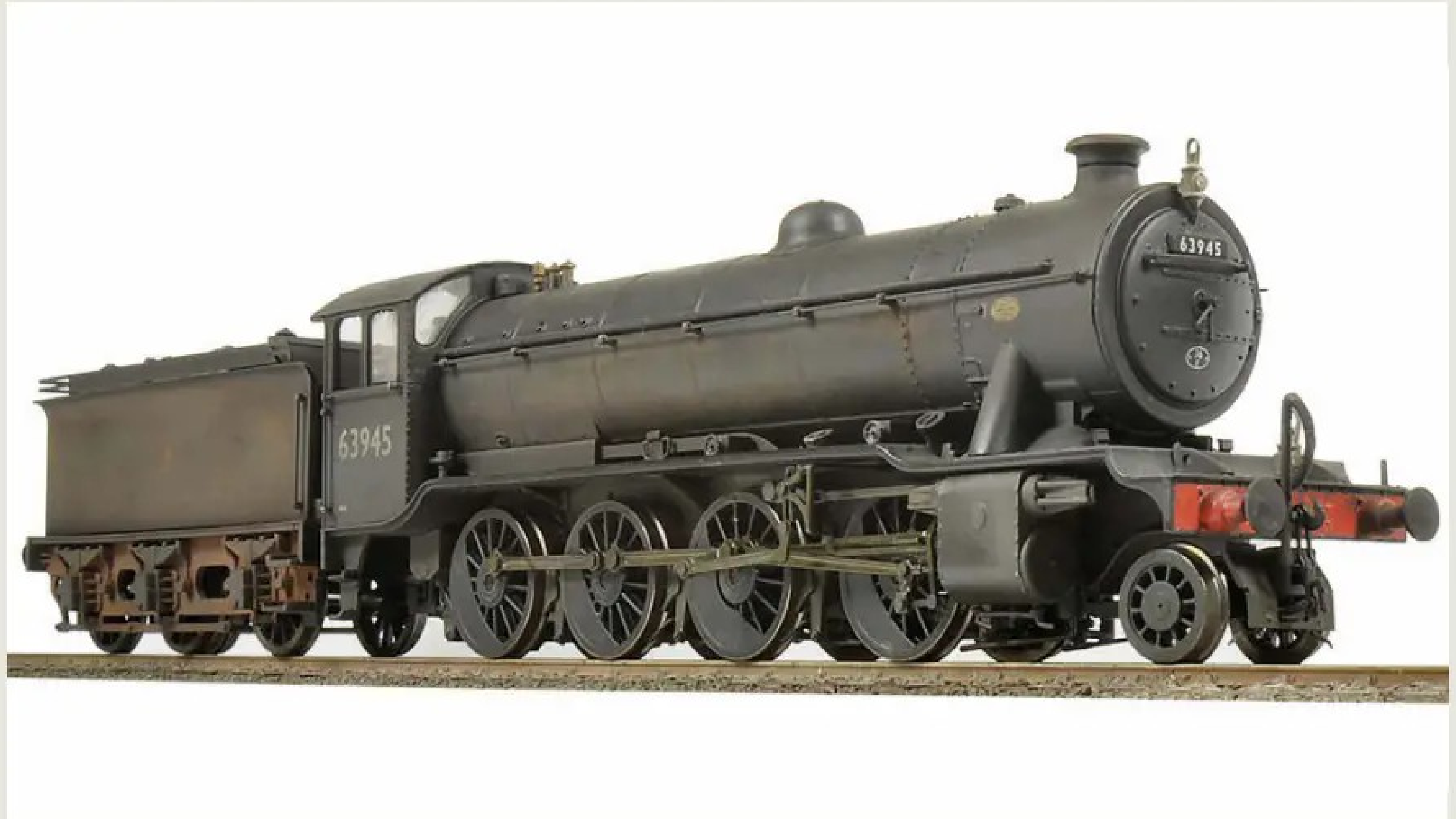
3 No weathering applied as yet, though I have added the extra handrail on the tender – lick-painted with matt black enamel.



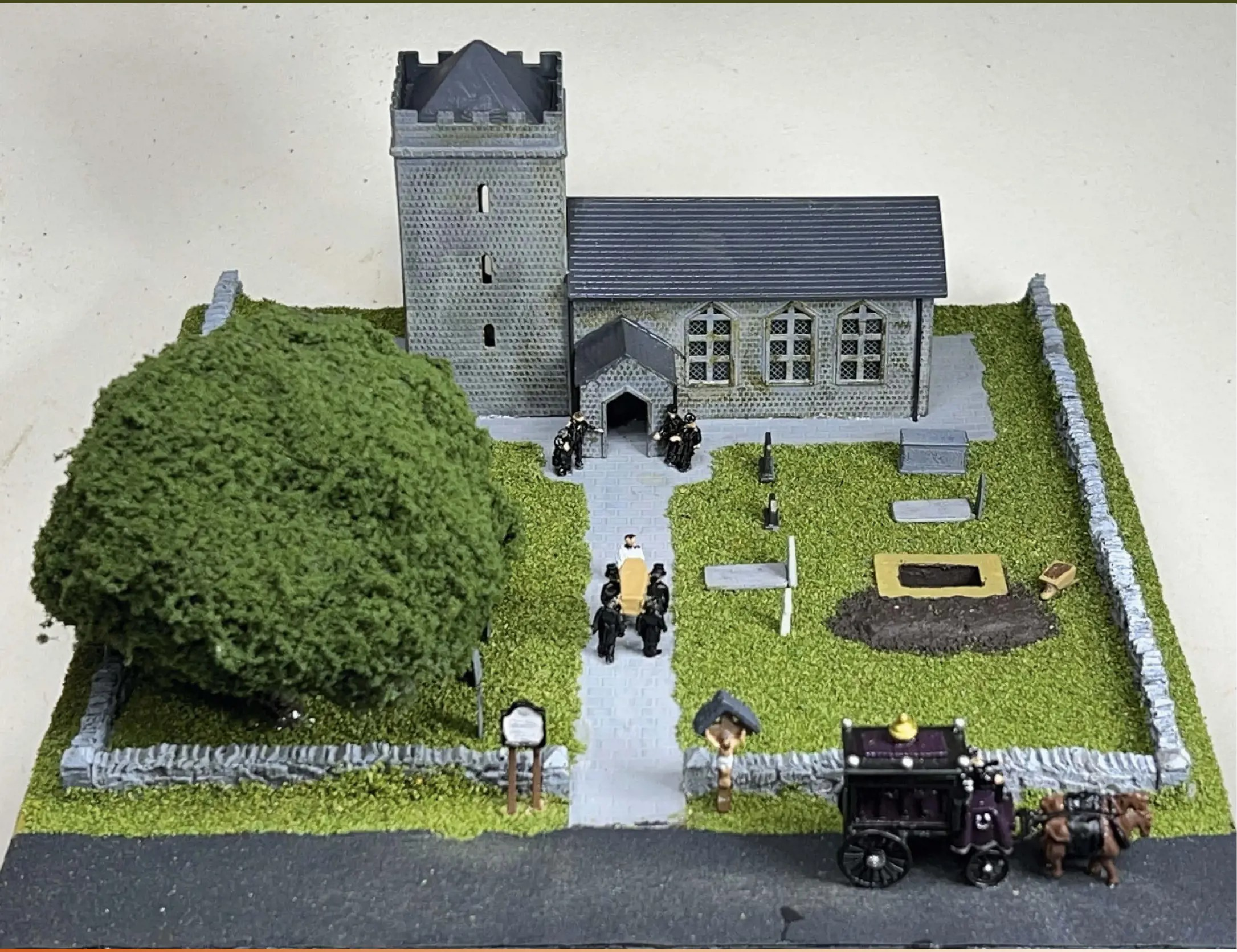
4 Even without weathering, Heljan's latest O2/4 presents as a very realistic model. The worksplate on the smokebox side is legible.



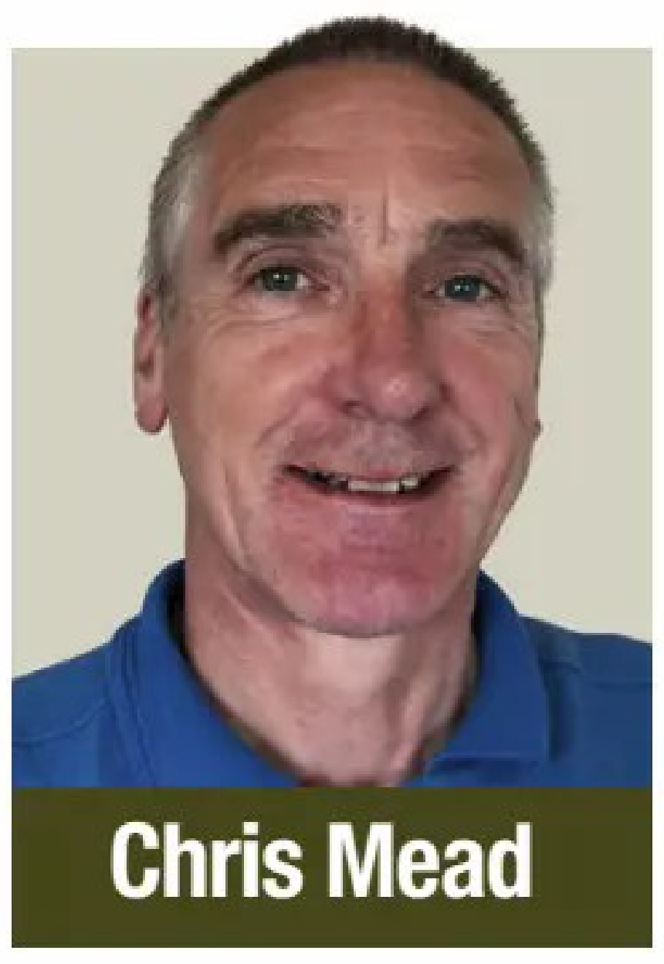
5 Geoff Haynes took the weathering on 63945 to greater 'extremes', again after observation of prototype photographs (Keith Pirt's Booklaw colour albums are invaluable here). This is exactly how I remember seeing these types at Retford.



6 As with the O2/2, now in revenue-earning service on 'Little Bytham'. These truly are lovely models, enhanced with just a few tweaks/weathering. They're certainly the equal (and probably better) than anything I've built as an equivalent.



A Grave Undertaking



Chris Mead

A FEW months ago, I moved out of my 'OO' comfort zone to build a 7mm greenhouse. This time, I have gone the other way into the smaller scale of N gauge. With the Gaugemaster Church plastic kit as a centrepiece, I set about creating a funeral scene, which one could have quite possibly witnessed at a small parish church in days gone by.

WHAT YOU NEED

Gaugemaster
'N' gauge church kit

Humbrol
Olive drab acrylic spray paint

Javis
'N' gauge stone walling

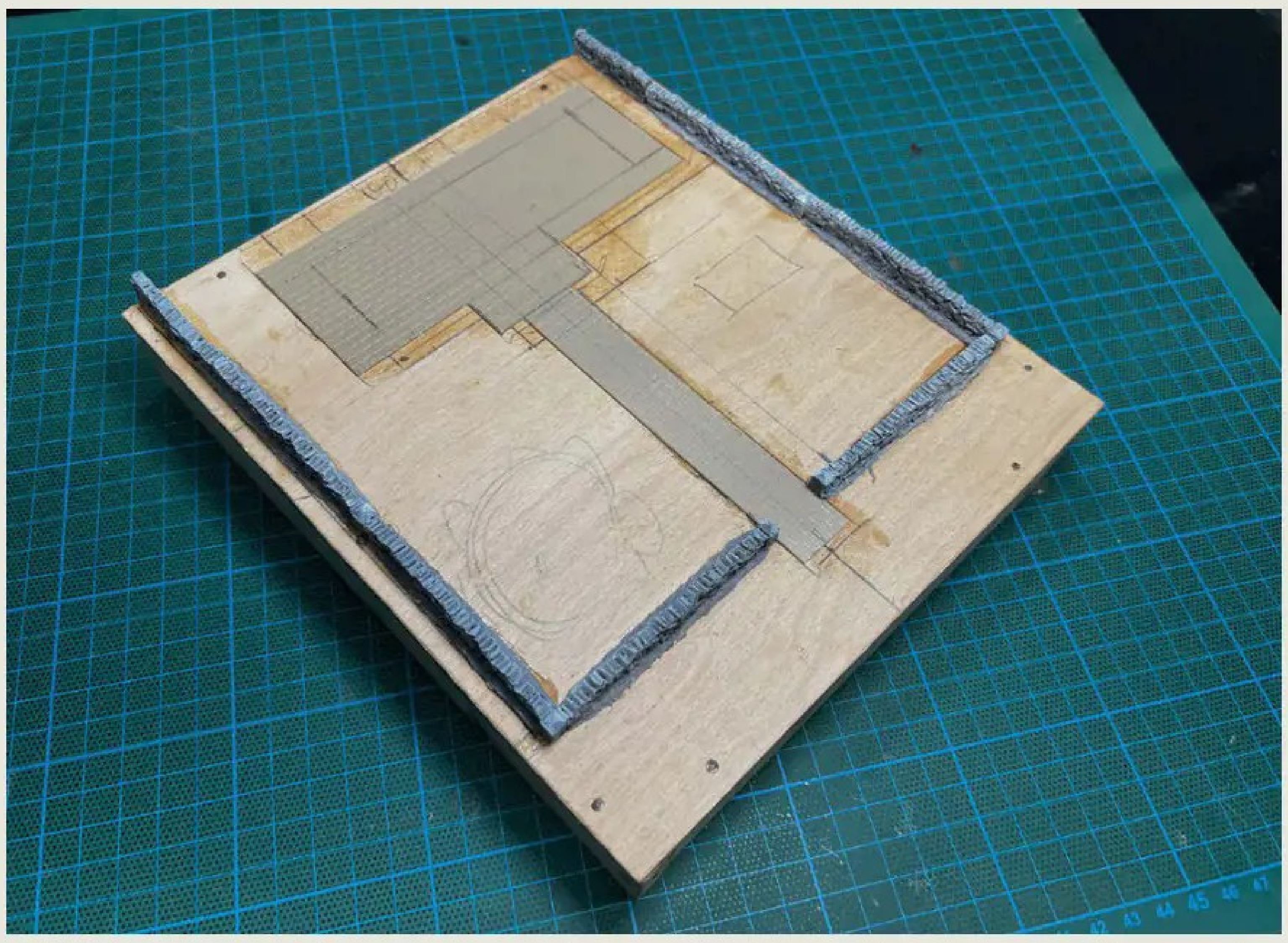
Langley
Hearse, Pall Bearers, Notice Board & Crucifix, Headstone packs

Scene Setters
Leaded light glazing bar sheet L02

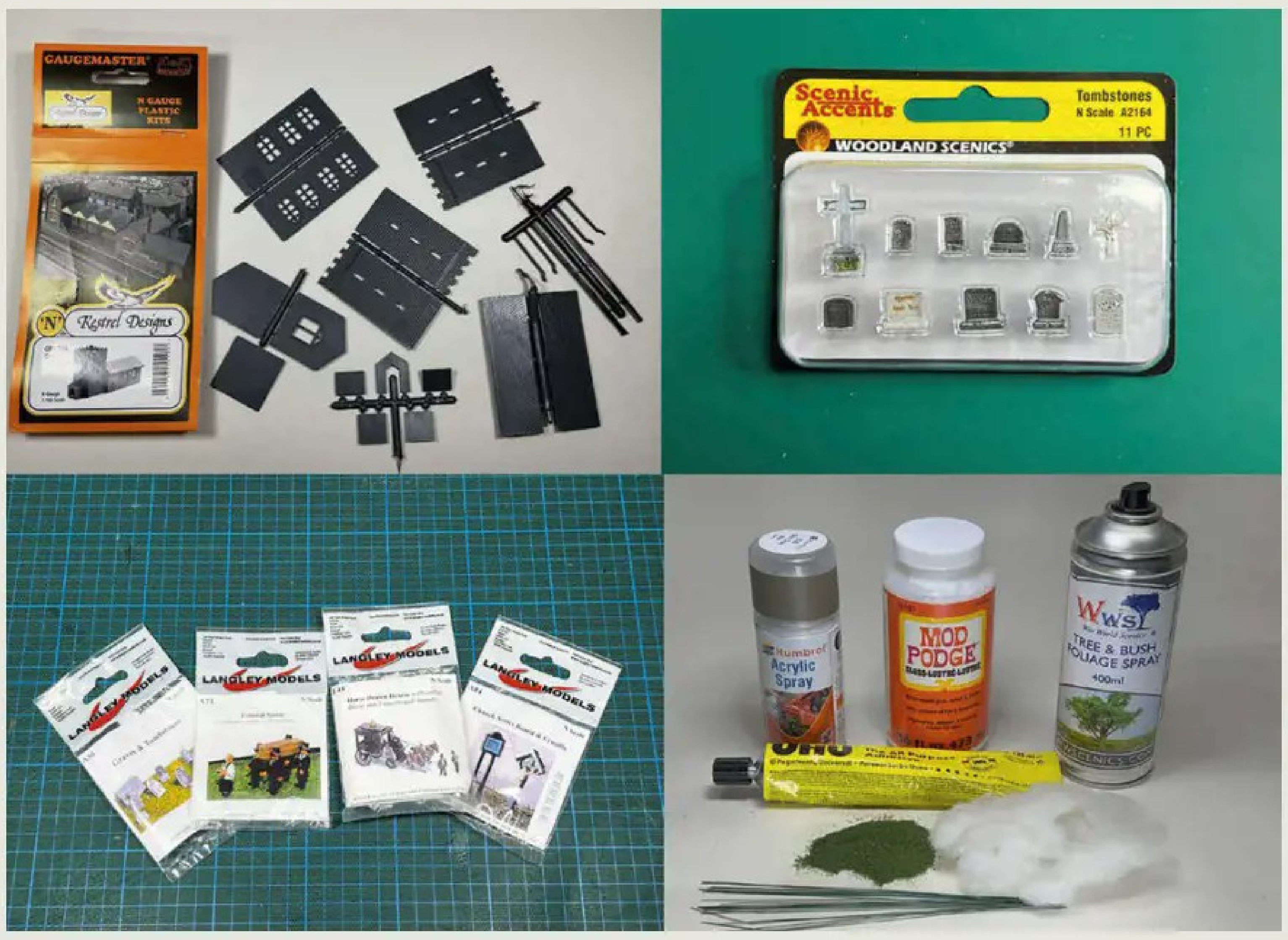
Slaters
20 & 40 thou Plastikard

Woodland Scenics
Tombstones

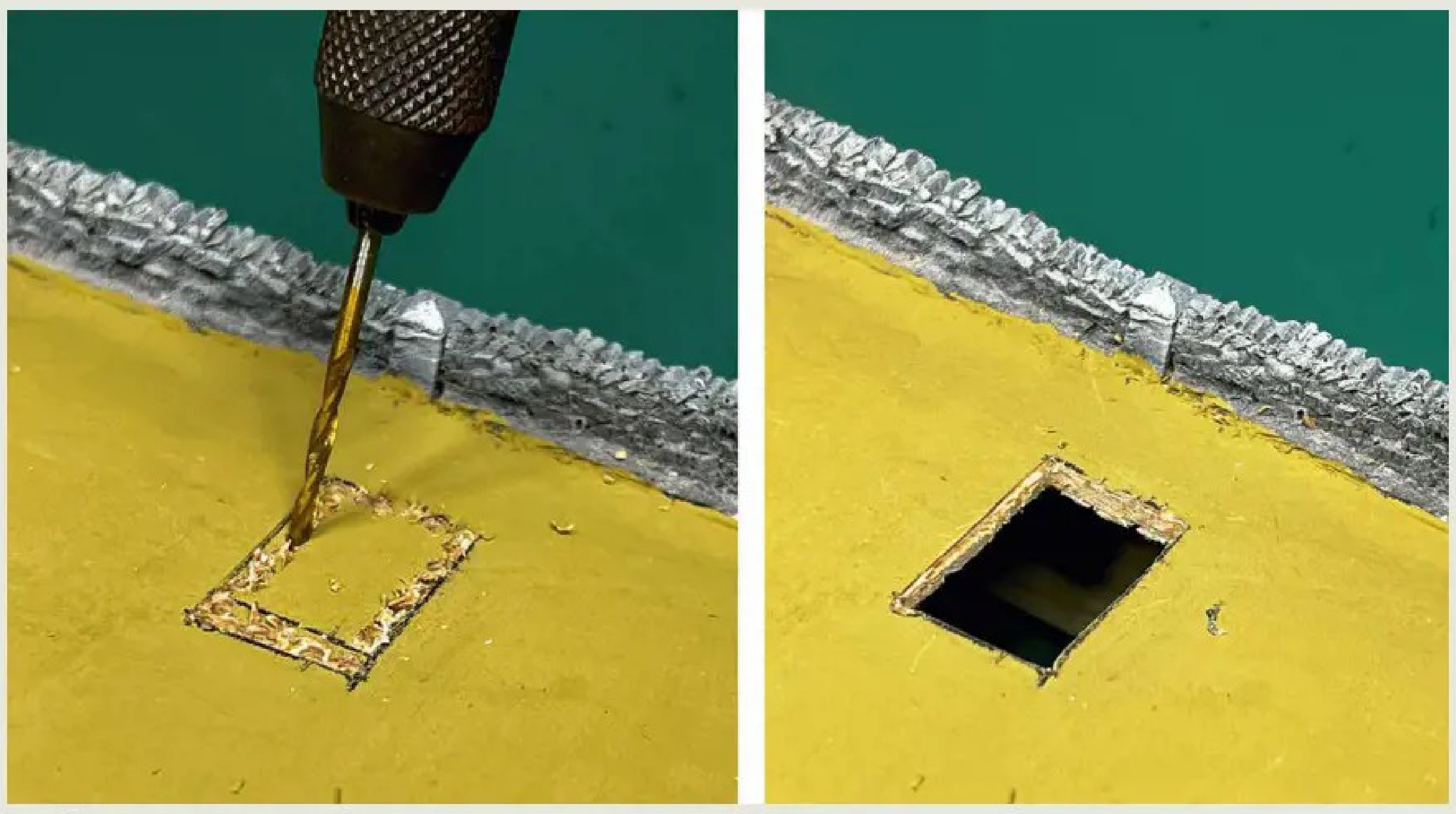
Other
Modelling knife, steel rule, assorted files, assorted brushes, hand drill, acrylic paints, textured 'mud' paint, adhesives: Contact, Superglue and 50/50 water/wood glue mix, 4mm roofing tile plastic sheet, meadow grass scatter, fine grade wet and dry sanding sheet, 1mm dia. plastic rod, 1.5mm dia. decorative balls, florists' wire, Modge Podge, hollow fibre stuffing, dark green scatter.



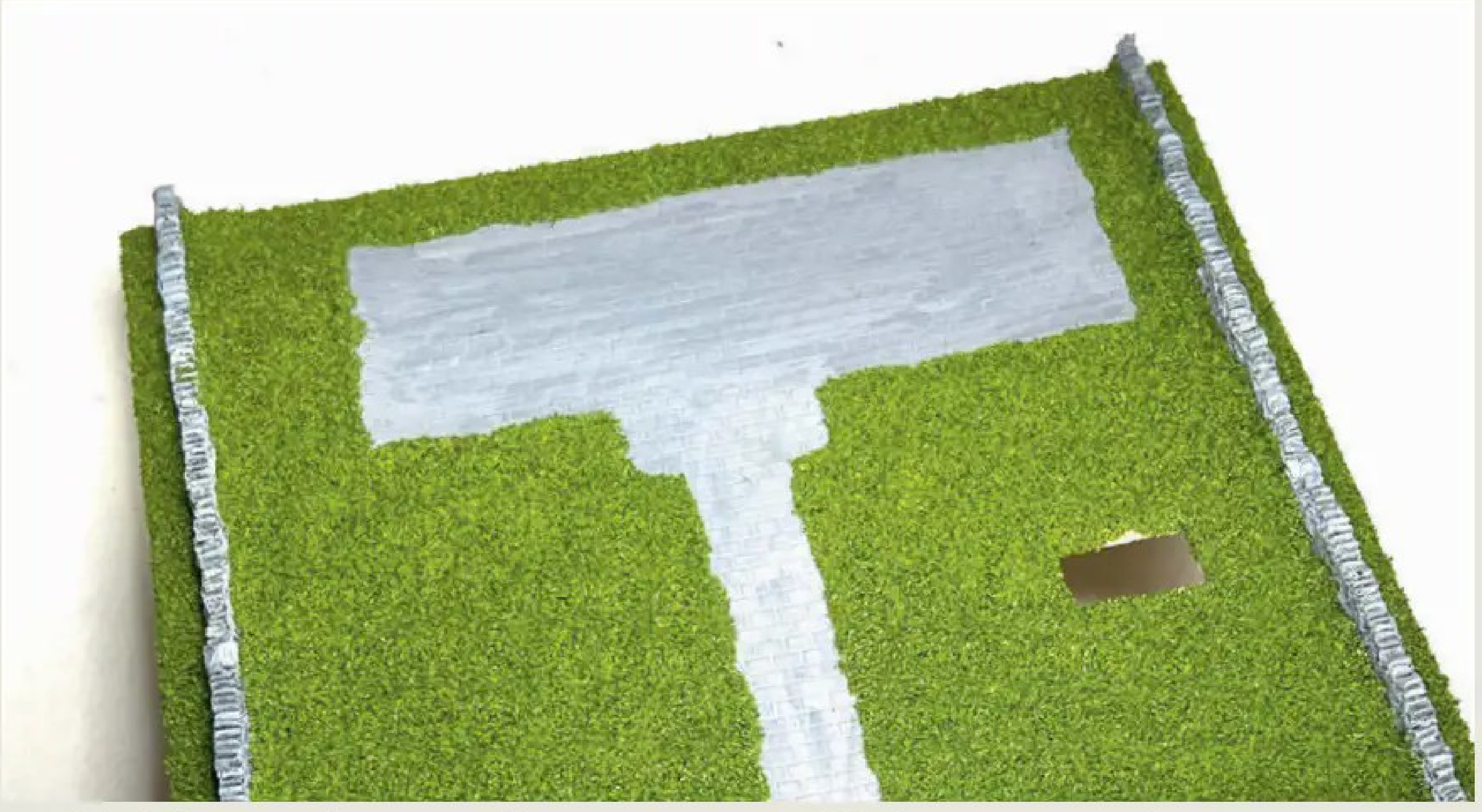
1 The scene is set on a piece of 180mm* 230mm plywood. The idea was to have the church at the rear, with a path leading from the road, using 4mm roofing tile plastic card for the large paving stones. This allowed room on one side for the awaiting grave, and on the other, a large foreboding tree (a yew, perhaps; something I always associate with churchyards).



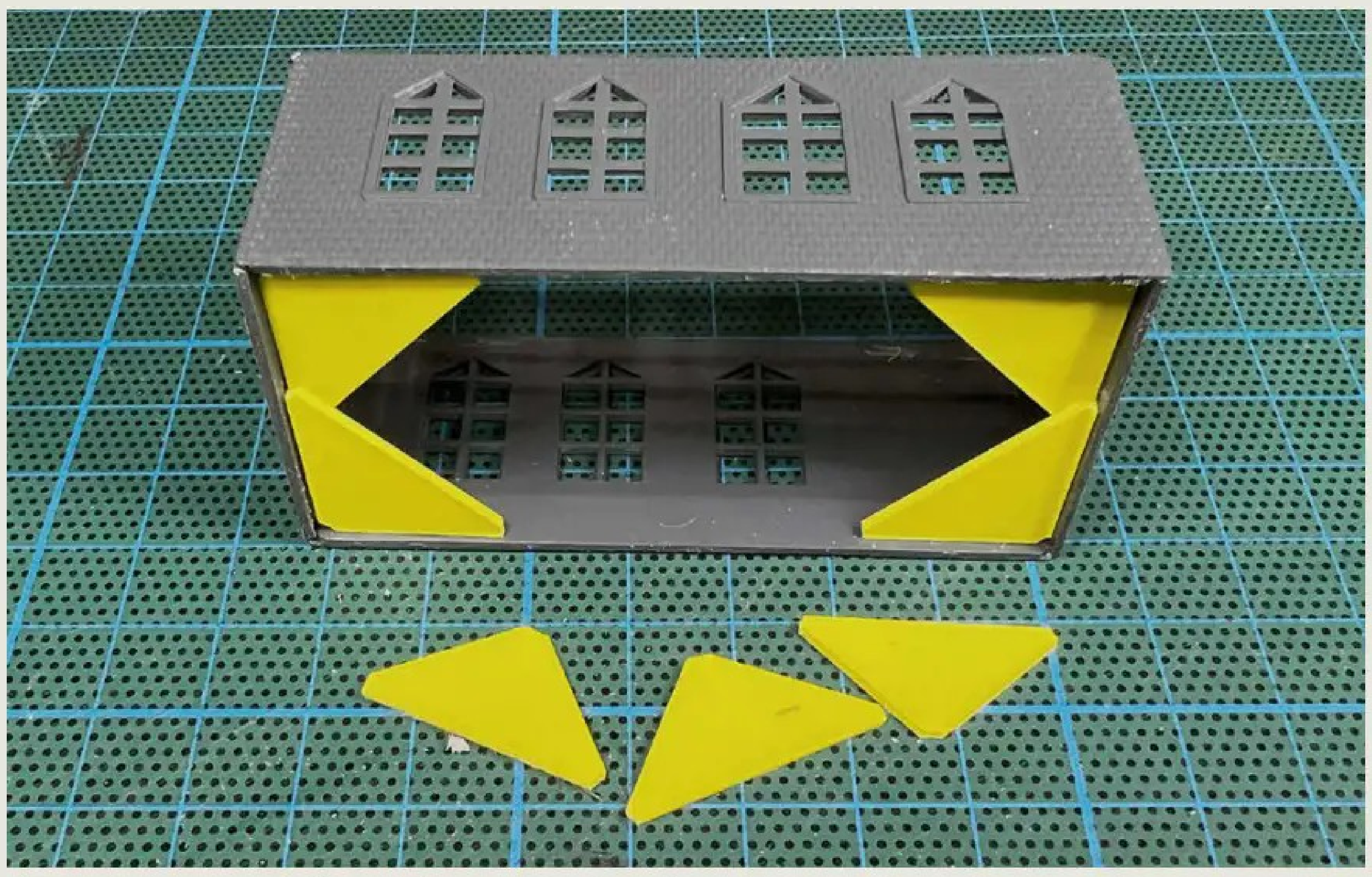
2 The main items for the scene were the Gaugemaster church, the hearse, pallbearer and notice board packs from Langley, together with their gravestones and some from Woodland Scenics. For the tree, I needed florists' wire, polyester fibre, acrylic paste, spray paint, dark green scatter and both contact and spray adhesive.



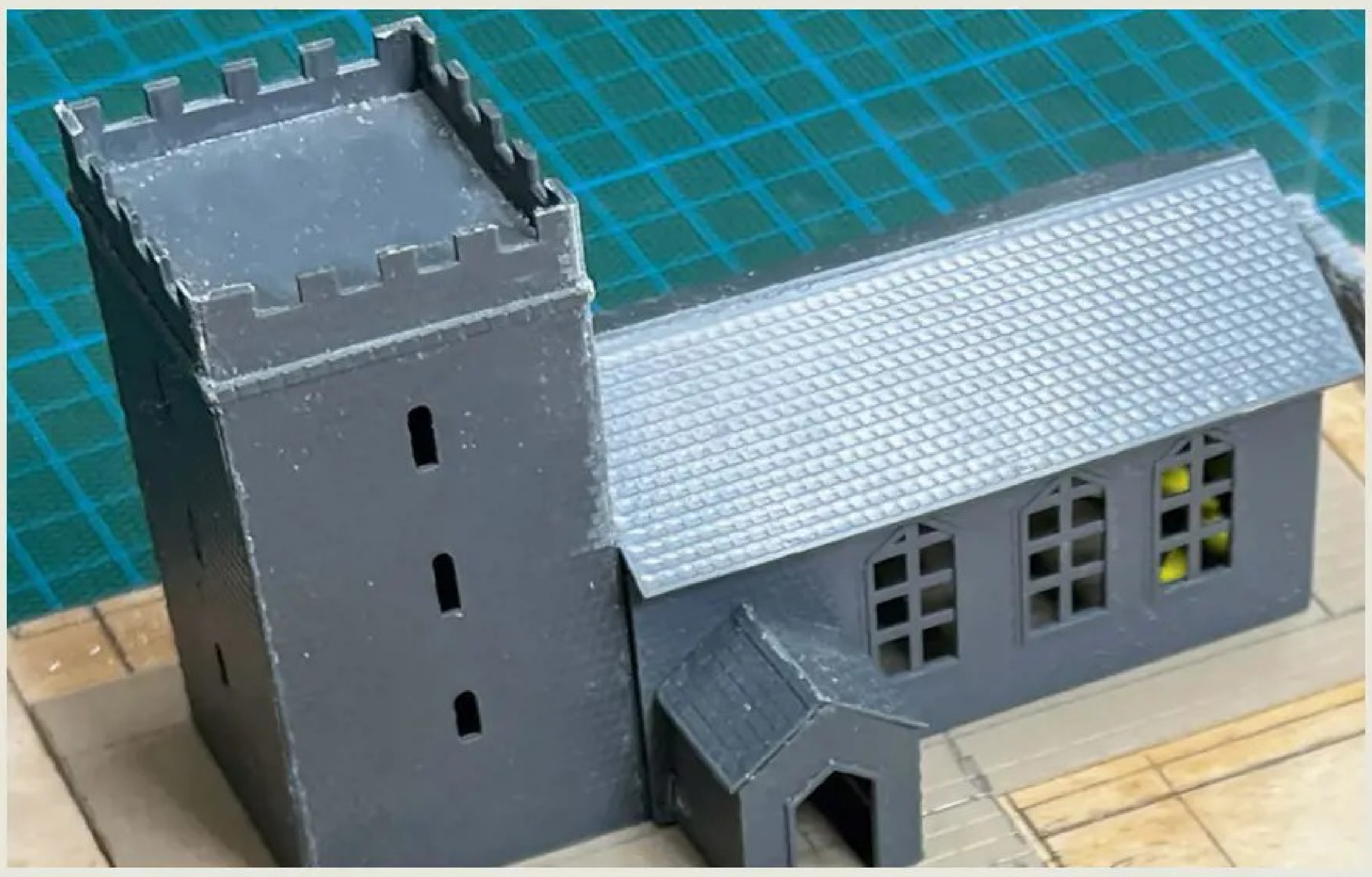
3 Javis N gauge stone wall pieces were used to surround the churchyard on three sides. A hole was cut in the plywood for the grave using a 2mm hand drill for the rough shape. It was then cleaned up and filed to size.



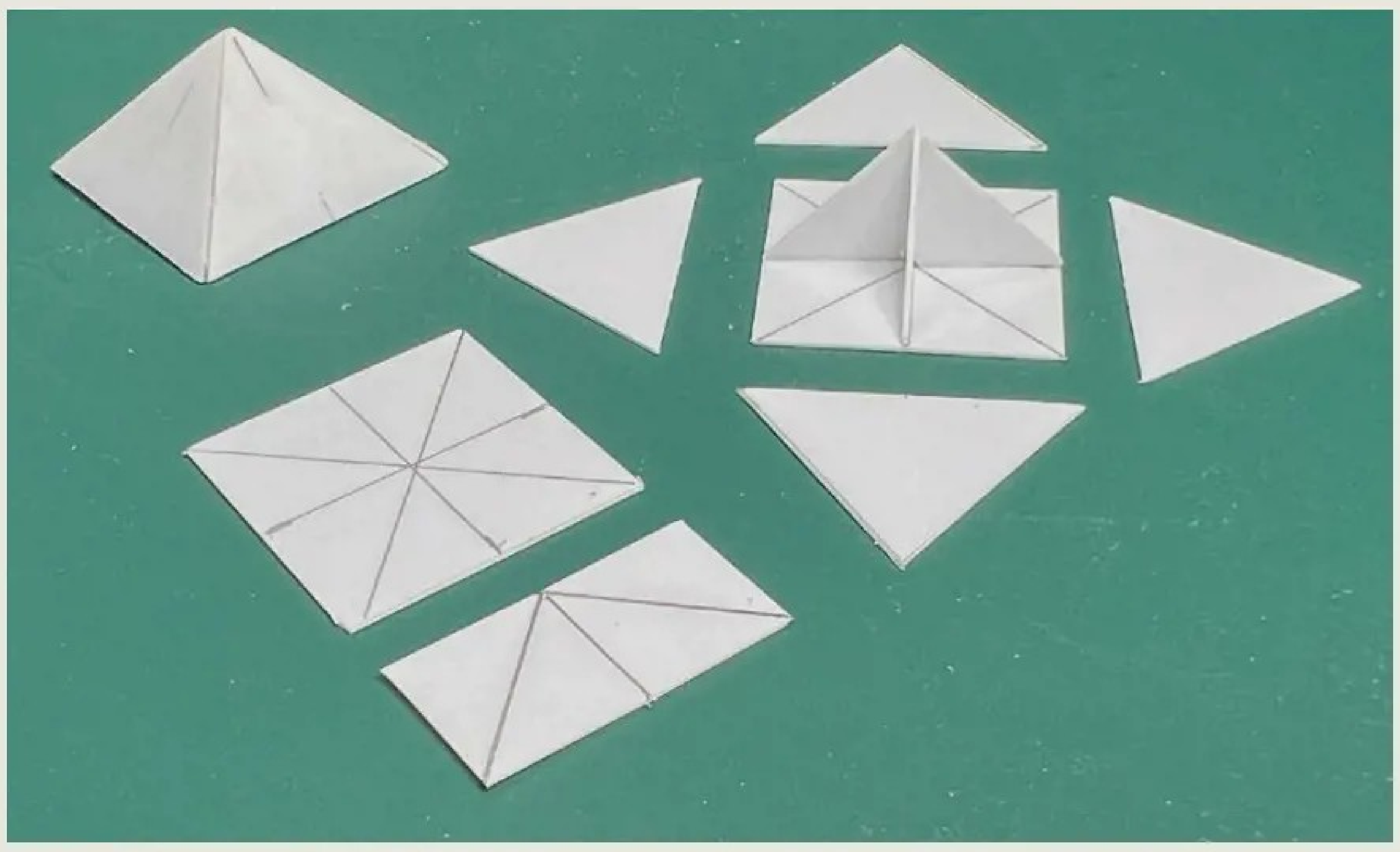
4 The path was given a coat of light grey and some washes of darker shades to weather it in. Wet and dry sanding paper painted dark grey was used for the road. Meadow grass scatter applied with a 50/50 mix of wood glue and water completed the grassed area of the churchyard.



5 Assembling the main body of the church was tricky as it lacked features to guarantee squareness. This is common to many kits, and I often use right-angled gussets of Plastikard to avoid the problem and also to give the structure a bit more rigidity. I cut off the corner tips to ensure a flush fit to the walls. The gussets can also act as a base to fit a floor.

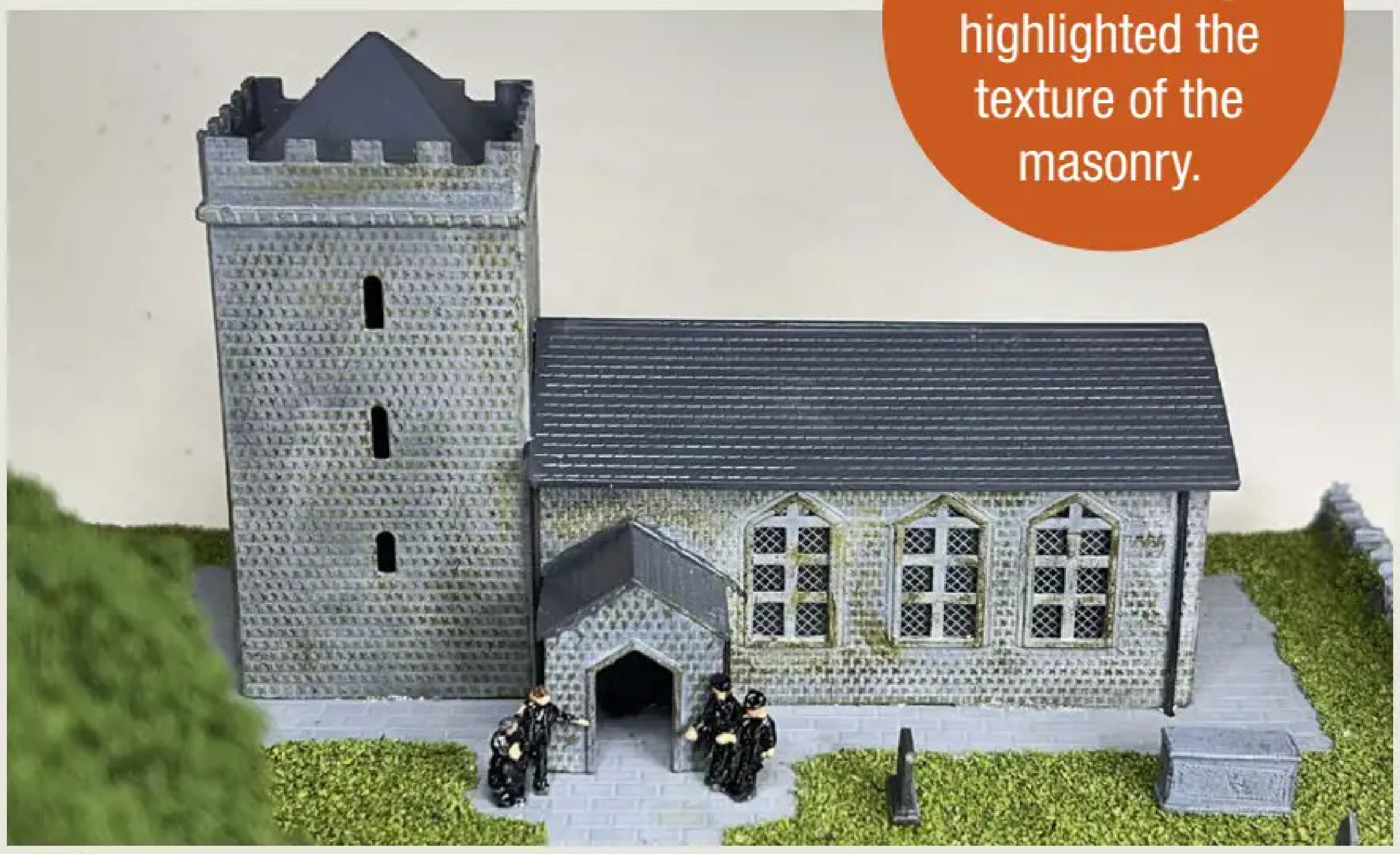


6 The roof and tower were added, along with the porch to the side door rather than to the tower as in the picture on the pack. A fair bit of work was needed to get the corners of the stonework neat. I also decided not to fit the guttering as it felt a little oversize to me (just my personal preference).

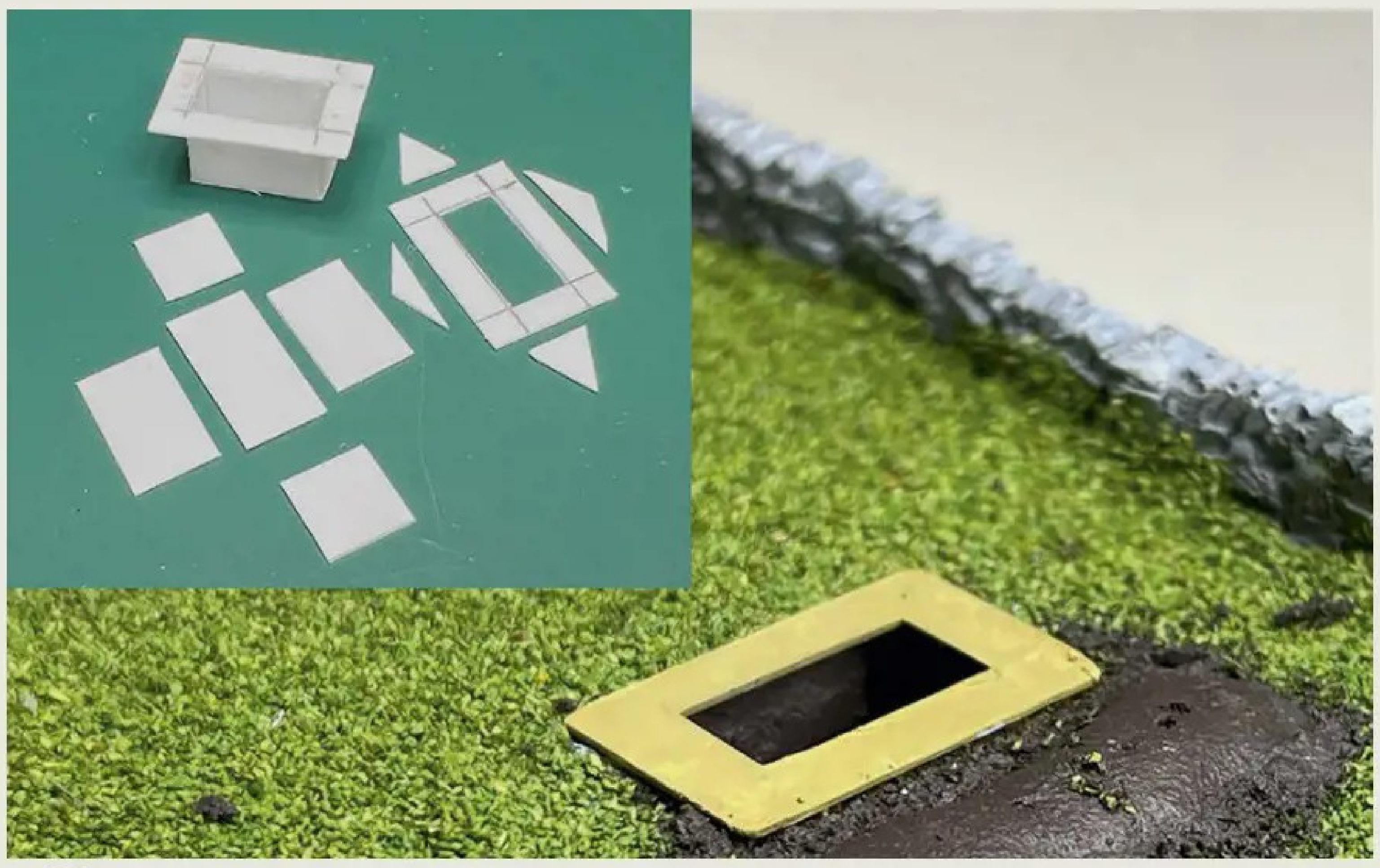


7 The tower's flat top was a bit plain for me, so I added a pitched roof. This was made from 20 thou Plastikard. It had a 26mm square base with 13mm high triangular supports. The roof pieces were cut to size using dimensions from the base, and the long edge of the supports (20mm).

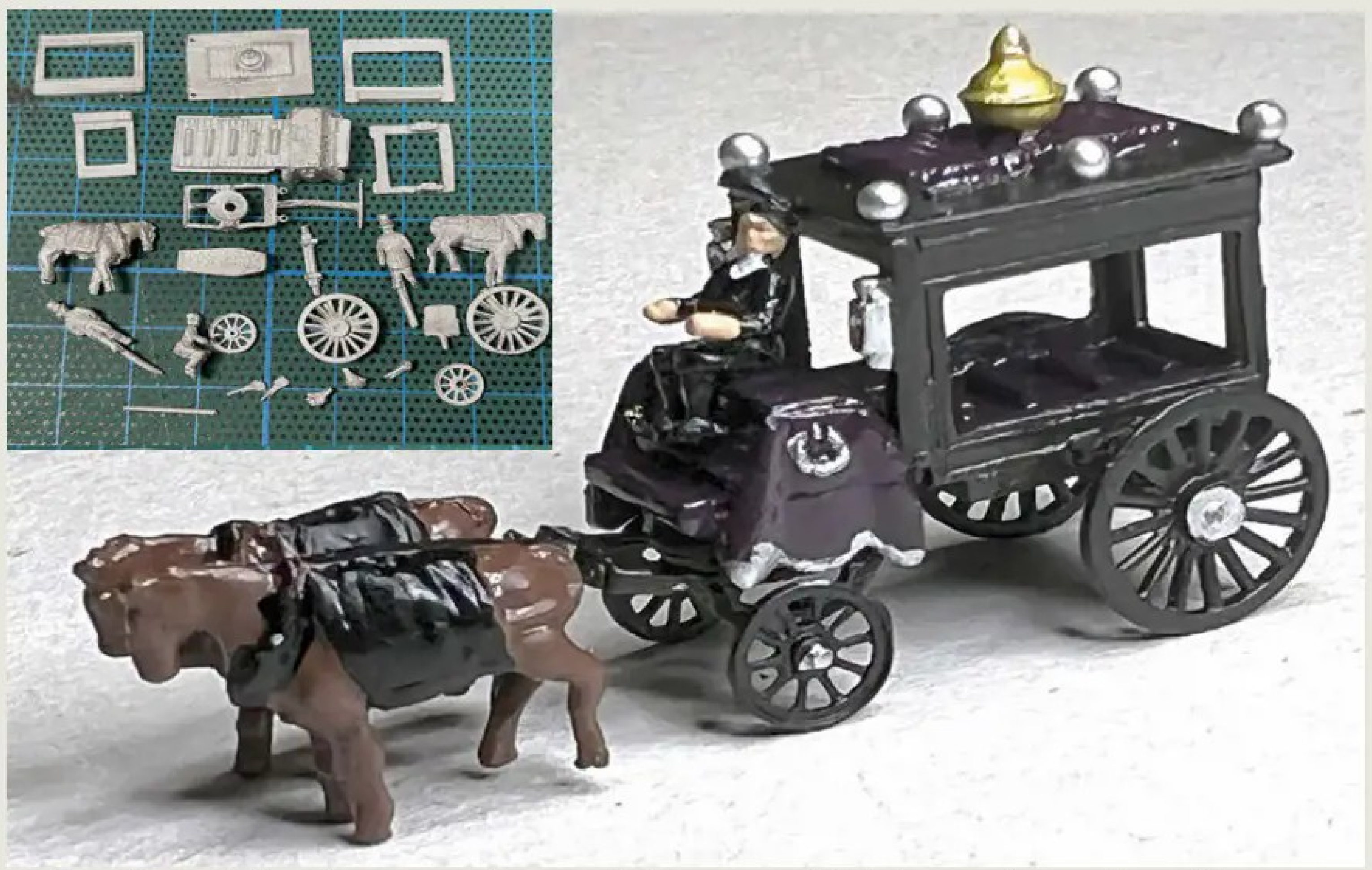
TOP TIP
Dry-brushing highlighted the texture of the masonry.



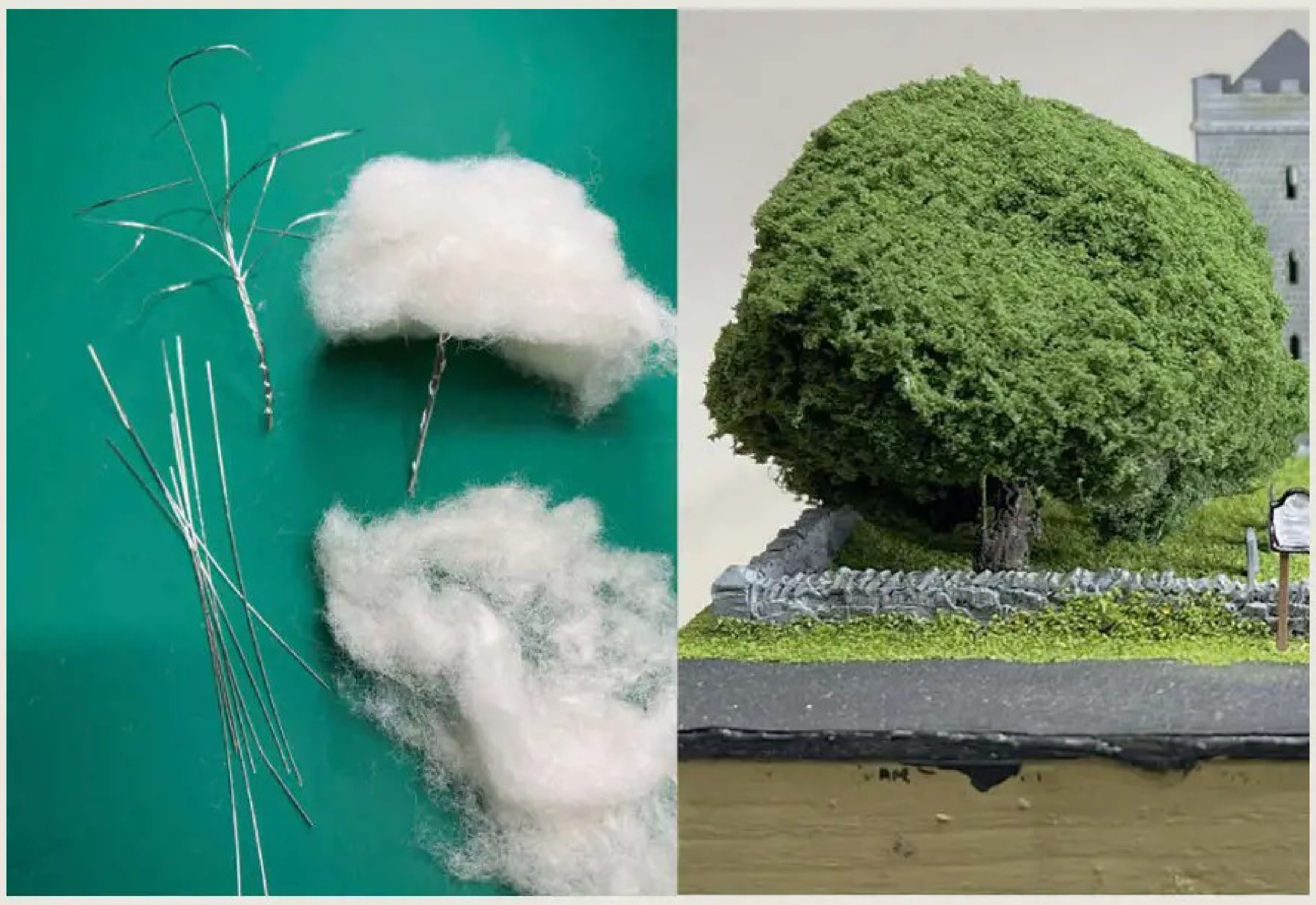
8 The completed building was painted light grey for the stonework in keeping with the walling and dark grey for the roofs. I used leaded glass sheet L02 for the windows. Although I did not use the guttering supplied, I added my own downpipes of 1mm diameter plastic rod to the main roof and porch.



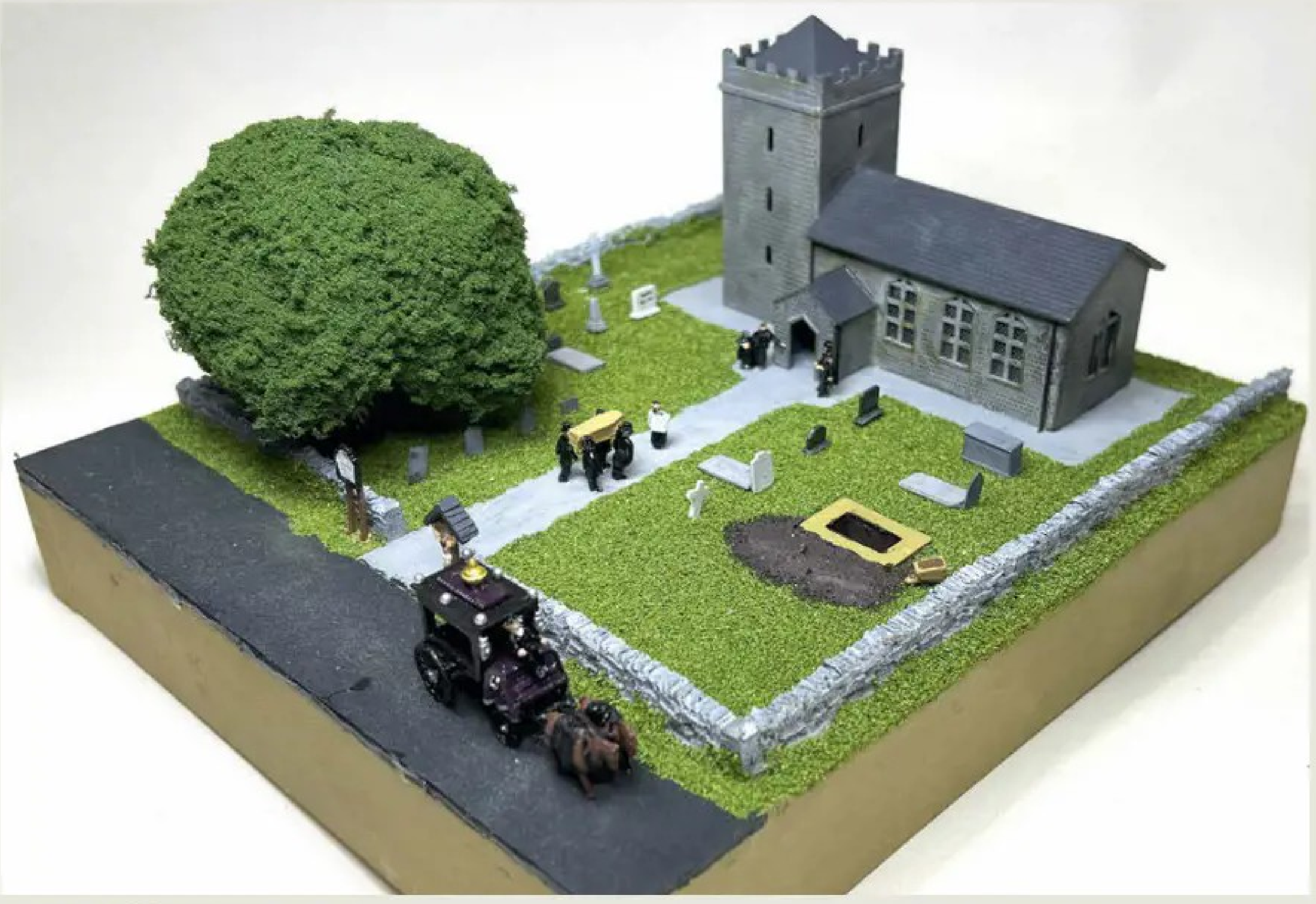
9 The grave opening was made from 20thou Plastikard for the sides and surrounding duckboards. Citadel Paints textured mud was used for the removed soil, and the painted assembly pressed into this.



10 The hearse is a whitemetal kit from Langley. It was assembled with superglue and finished in black, with purple and silver highlights for the cloth drapes and furnishings. The spheres on the roof are 1.5mm plastic balls from a local craft shop.



11 The tree was made with florists' wire and polyester fibre in the same basic way as described in an earlier article (BRM November 2024). However, this time I wanted a more densely compacted effect, so used more fibre, which I moulded into a ball shape and gave a generous coating of dark green scatter material.



12 The scene was completed with the addition of the pallbearers and priest moving towards the small group of mourners at the door. Assorted headstones were placed around the churchyard, some with stone slabs (20mm Plastikard) over the grave. The notice board was also added to the entrance.

Dave Hall's Variations on The Hornby W4 Peckett

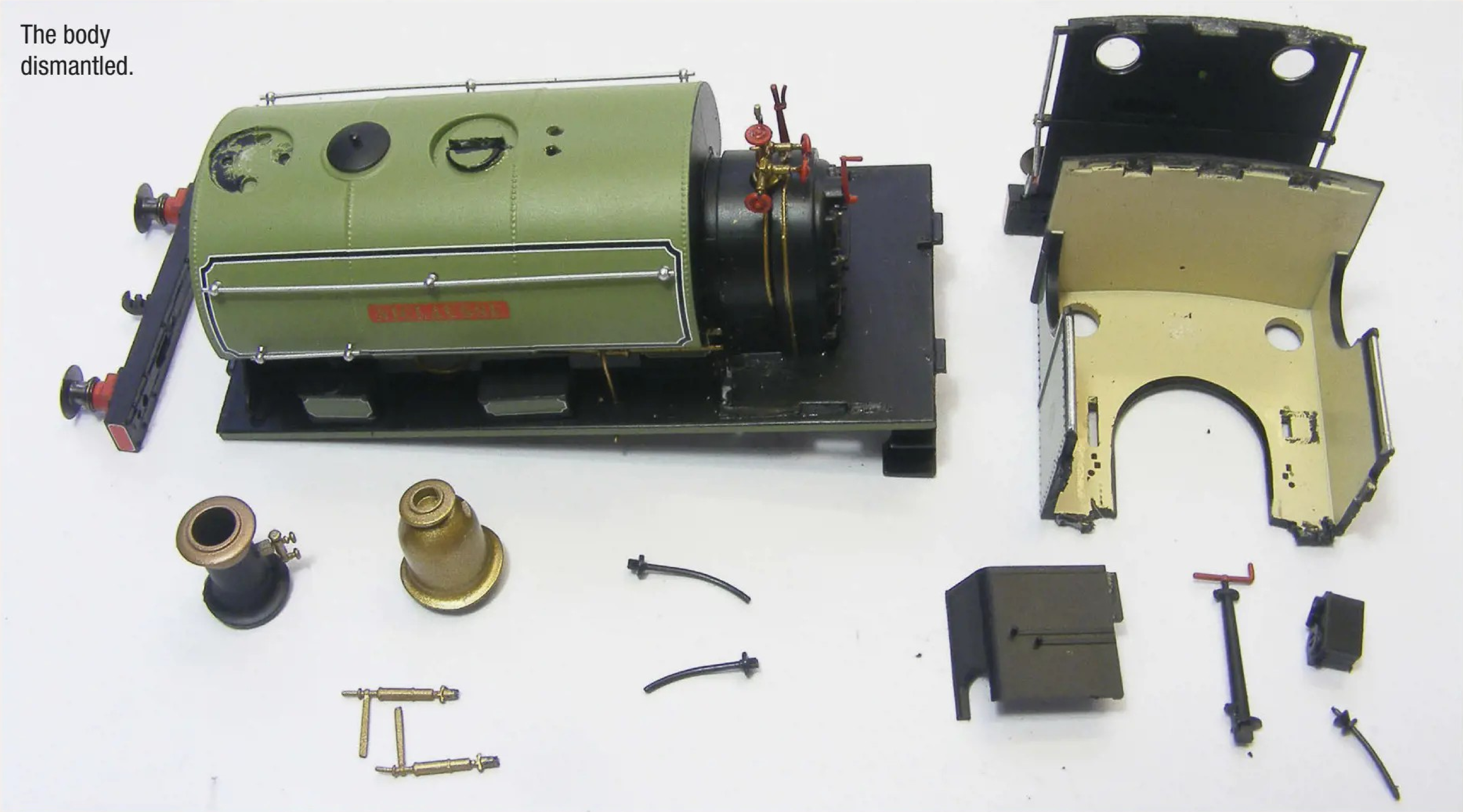
THE PECKETT W4 Class 0-4-0ST first appeared on the shelves of retailers in December 2016. It is a very nice model, with a high level of detail and superb running qualities that certainly appear to have made it a winner for Hornby. It is also a very popular model, even if most of them are bought only for the 'cute' factor and will never be operated on a true industrial layout that depicts their prototypical use. The theme Hornby has pursued is to offer what is basically the same model but in different liveries. True, there are detail differences in them, such as domes, the positioning of toolboxes, and smokebox door differences, but nothing drastic, and there were some rather drastic alterations made to the standard W4 design in the real world. This conservative approach is most probably due to the cost of producing the required tooling, but we are modellers, and we can produce our own variations using nothing more than a saw, a scalpel, files, sandpaper and glue, right?

The most interesting prototypes, to my mind at least, were those that were ordered for situations that required a lower than standard height, in order to work in places such as gasworks, or steelworks. These alterations would be specified by the customer and the locomotives built to fit the situation, rather than being modified subsequently, as we must do with the model. In fact, I find them so fascinating that on my latest micro layout, 'Harboro Stone', I deliberately designed in a restricted clearance tunnel as an excuse to chop up a few Pecketts.

As far as the prototype goes, those with a dropped footplate would often retain the same height of cab, meaning that the crew worked in conditions no more cramped than a standard W4, although the frame plates would protrude into the footplate space. Examples that retained the original level of footplate would, of course, have the roof lowered, thus making it impossible for all but the extremely vertically challenged to stand up at all. To get around this, the area of the footplate between the frames was lowered, forming a well in which the fireman could stand, or sit on the edge of the footplate with his legs in the well. The driver would have to be seated, probably on a fold-up seat mounted on the cab side sheet. I say probably because, although there are works photographs of such cut-down engines, they do not show anyone on the footplate. No matter how the crew was situated, they can't have been pleasant engines to work.

All of the altered prototypes had the obvious boiler fittings lowered, but crew accommodation varied and could be a completely open footplate, a low canopy and a well between the frames, or a more or less normal cab with the footplate dropped. Which style you build, or by how much you drop the footplate, may depend on which model you start with. Here are a few examples…

DISMANTLING



The body dismantled.

This is always the part of a conversion faced with much trepidation, and almost destroying a new model can be just a bit off-putting if you haven't done it before. The chassis is easily removed by unfastening the two screws that hold it to the body and can be gently pulled out.

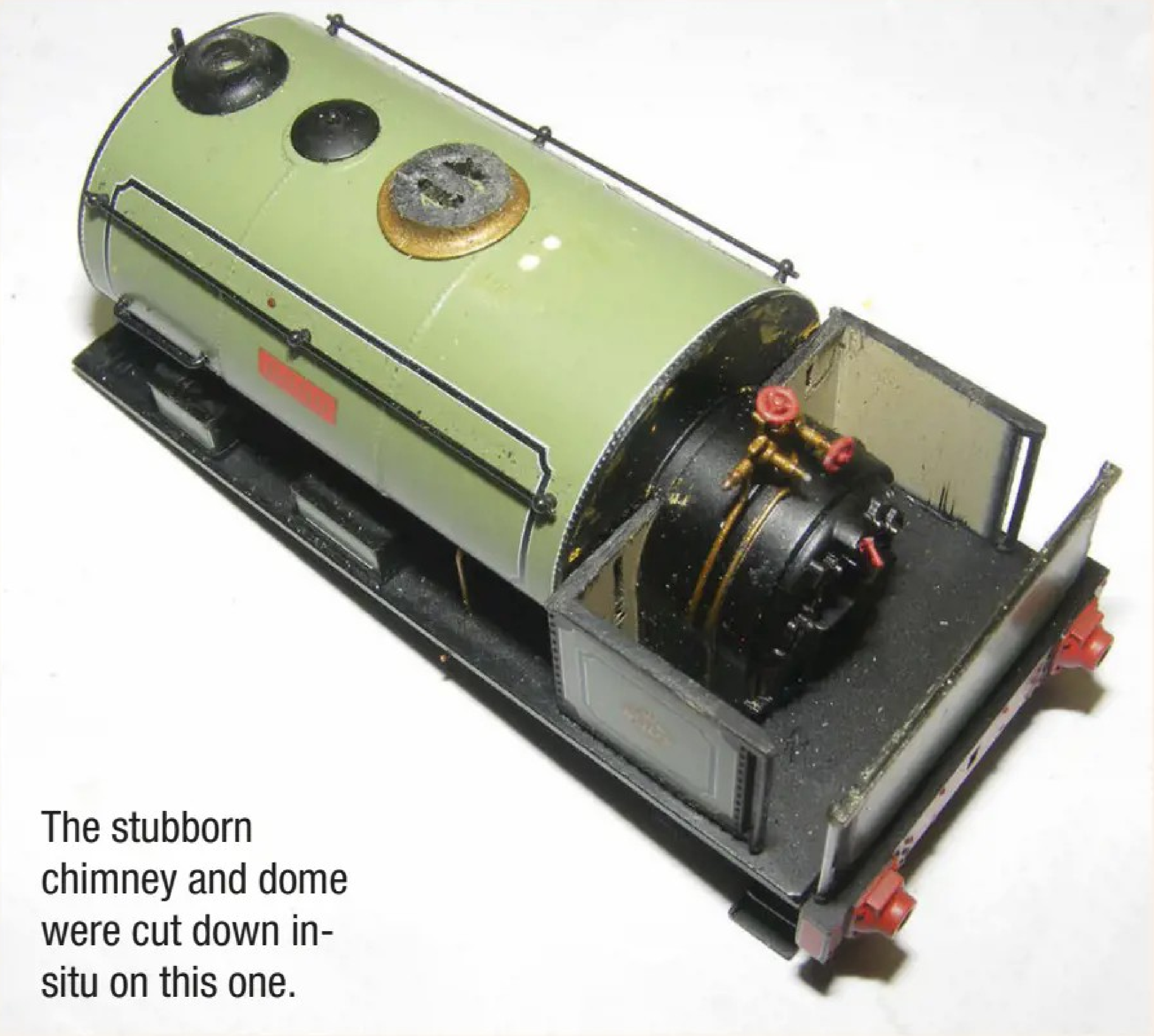
The body is held together with glue, and I have found that the older models tend to have had more glue used on them and are often quite difficult to take apart, whereas the later ones come apart quite easily. Begin with the whistle, if your model still has its whistle! Early models used a plastic whistle that tended to bend and break off very easily, but later ones use a turned brass item, which can be pulled out of the roof with care.

Next is the chimney and dome. If your model has the tall dome with Salter safety valves, these will also need to be removed. The chimney usually comes away by easing it back and forth slightly, until the glue can be heard cracking and it comes off. The same goes for the dome, but this may also require drilling from inside the saddle tank. The Salter valves are slotted into the dome without glue but are glued into the saddle tank, so use something like a tiny screwdriver to push them out from inside the saddle tank. The holes left by the Salter valves will need to be filled. If either the chimney or dome are really stubborn and will not move, do not despair. They can be cut in-situ and the stumps left in place.

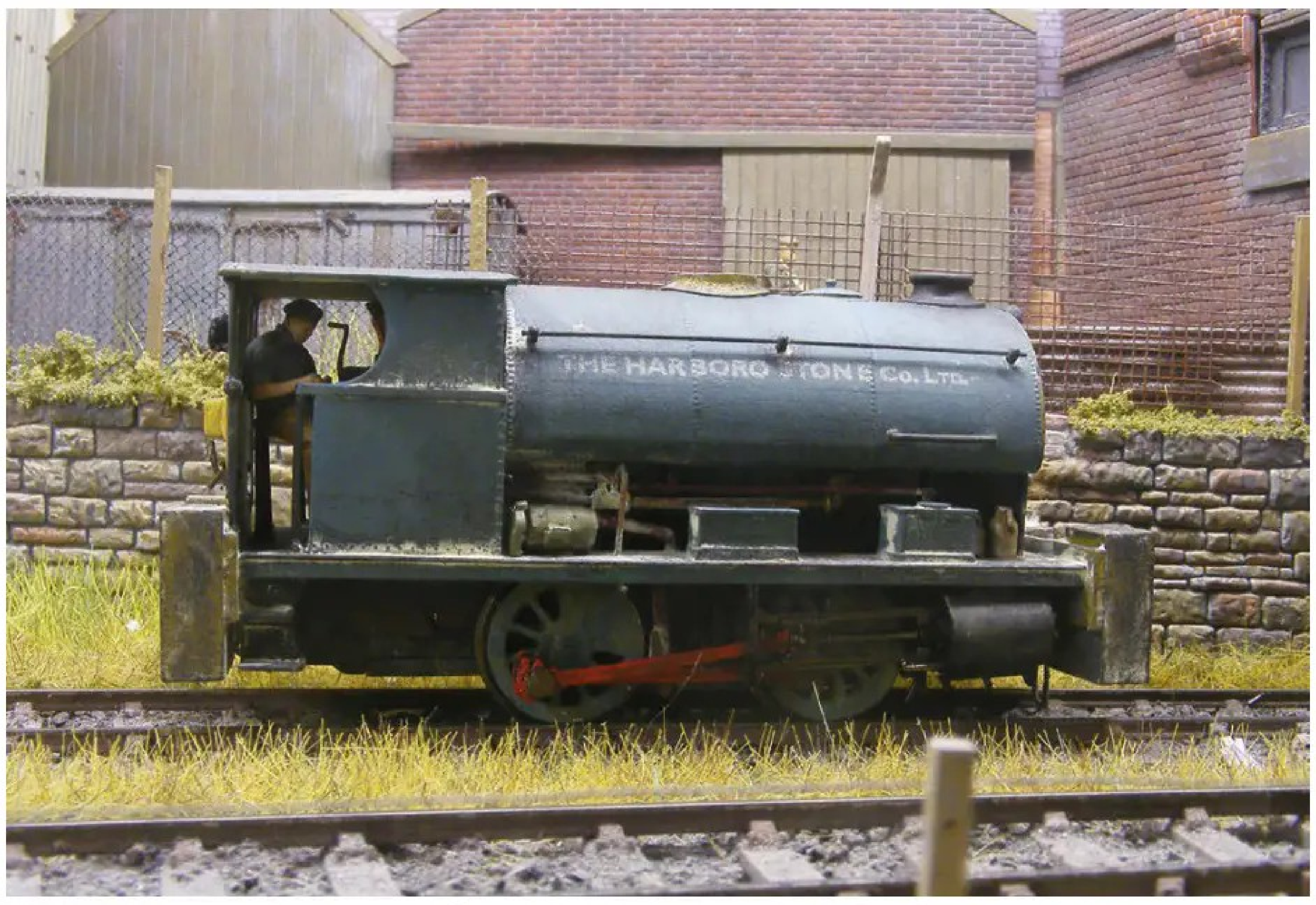
With the boiler fittings removed and kept safely aside, remove the rear buffer plank by gripping it with pliers, but ensure the pliers do not mark the plastic, so use some sort of padding between the part and the jaws. Ease the pliers in a twisting motion and the glue should crack and the buffer plank come free, but take care not to pull too far as the plank is firmly glued to the cab back sheet, which in turn is glued to the roof.

With the rear of the cab now free from the diecast running plate, the cab back sheet must now be detached from the roof. Use the same type of methods as before, but take care not to bend or snap either the roof or back sheet. With the back sheet removed, the hand brake standard can now be removed. It isn't essential that it is removed, but it will prevent it from becoming damaged. The reverser can also be removed for the same reason.

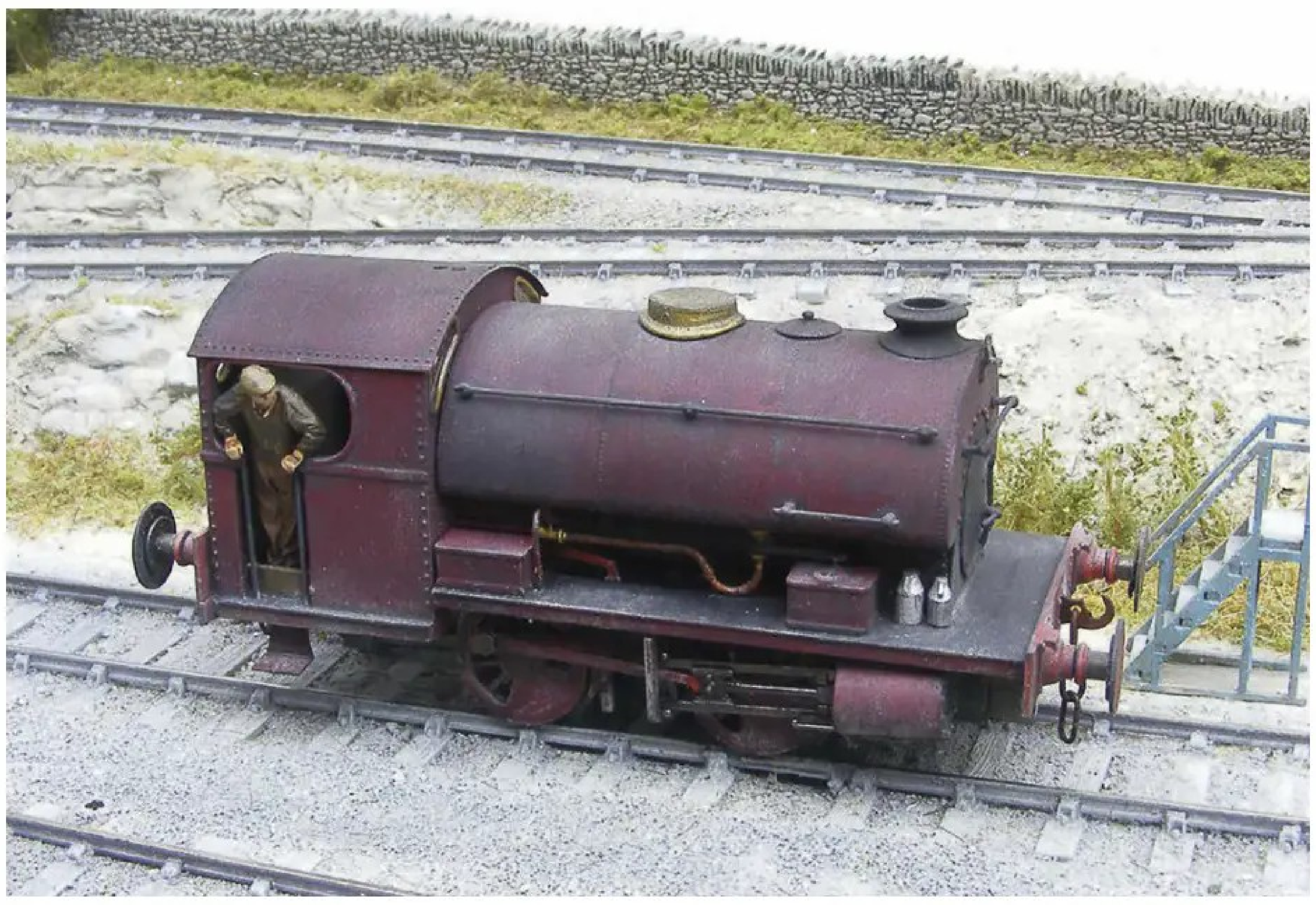
The cab itself is a single-piece moulding that is located into the diecast body by four tabs and slots into a groove in the firebox. No glue is used in the firebox slot, but the tabs are usually held fast with plenty of glue. The coal bunker is held by glue to the cab and comes away easily by using tweezers, as does the sandbox on the driver's side. Applying finger pressure to the sides can often break the glue joint there, but the tabs under the cab front sheet are the most difficult and can require drilling out, or simple brute force. The moulding, although thin, is quite strong and I have yet to break one. If you do go for brute force, it will detach suddenly and can take the steam manifold with it, so be prepared to battle the carpet monsters!



The stubborn chimney and dome were cut down in-situ on this one.



There is one other way of making a low-height Peckett and that is to purchase and fit the Planet Industrials cab kit. This is similar to the conversions described above in that it is based on prototype practice without being an actual prototype. The cab in the kit represents what became known as a 'Greenhithe' type of Class W6, which was actually the W4's somewhat larger and more modern cousin, and so the end result, while never having ever existed, certainly looks the part. The kit consists of a 3D-printed cab, etched roof, etched cab steps, replacement etched smokebox front, replacement 3D-printed buffer beams and chimney.



This example was constructed using a pre-production kit and so the chimney is the original Hornby item with a section cut out. The buffer heads are noticeably larger in diameter and are my own additions. I also cut down the tall dome and flattened it off. The safety valves are assumed to have been relocated to the top of the firebox, and so I drilled holes and fitted short tubes in the cab roof, which would allow vented steam to escape. This fitting of the safety valves wasn't common, but is prototypical to some low-height Pecketts.

SMALL ALTERATIONS

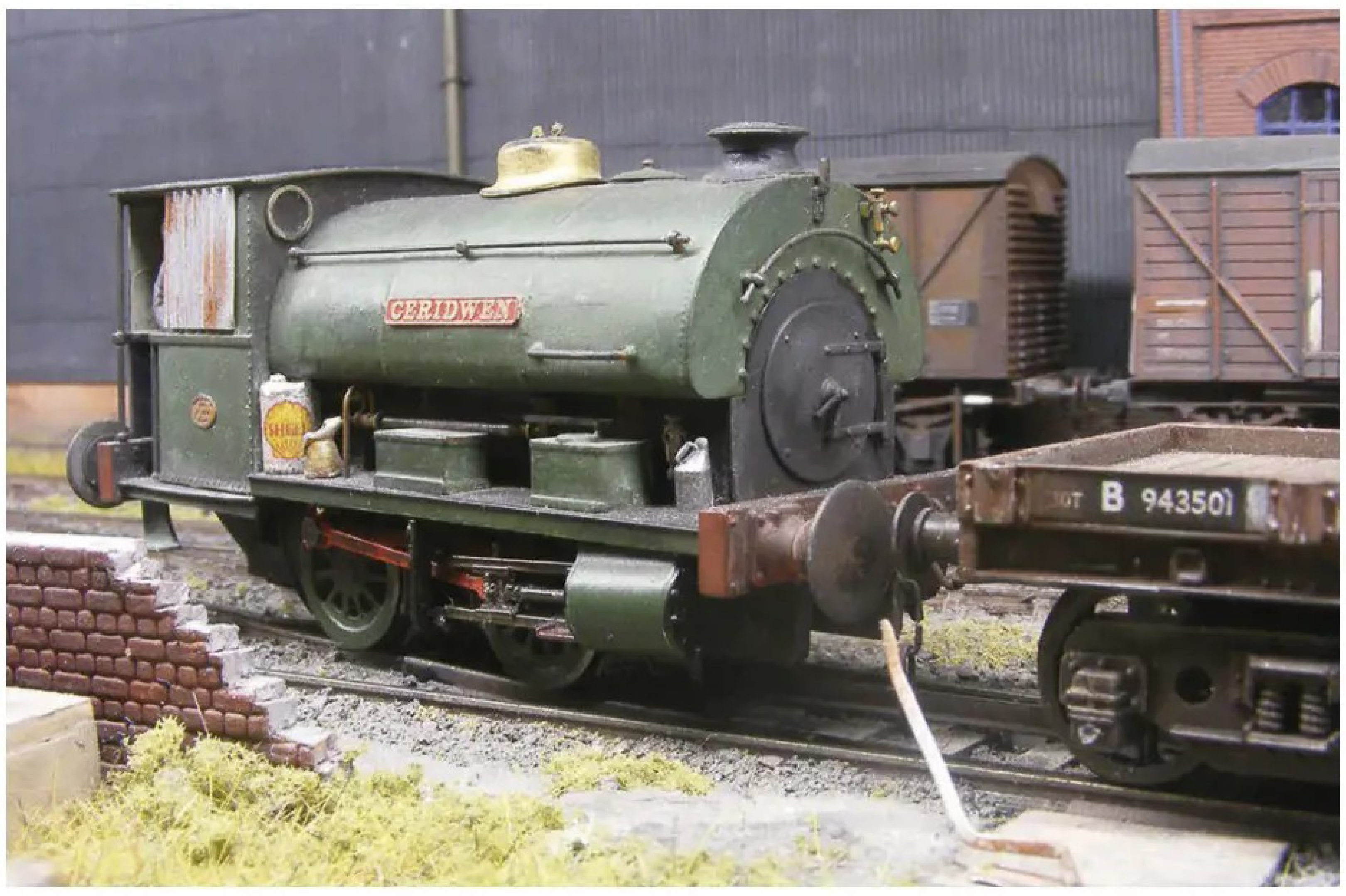
If you don't wish to undertake such major surgery as described above, but still want to personalise your model, there are a few small and easy things that you can do to post-date your Peckett.

Although not strictly prototypical, as the W4 wouldn't necessarily have had these features, they make it appear more modern, as if it is another, unspecified, type. The first is to cut off the wings from the smokebox front. Pecketts appear to have ceased using these in the 1920s.

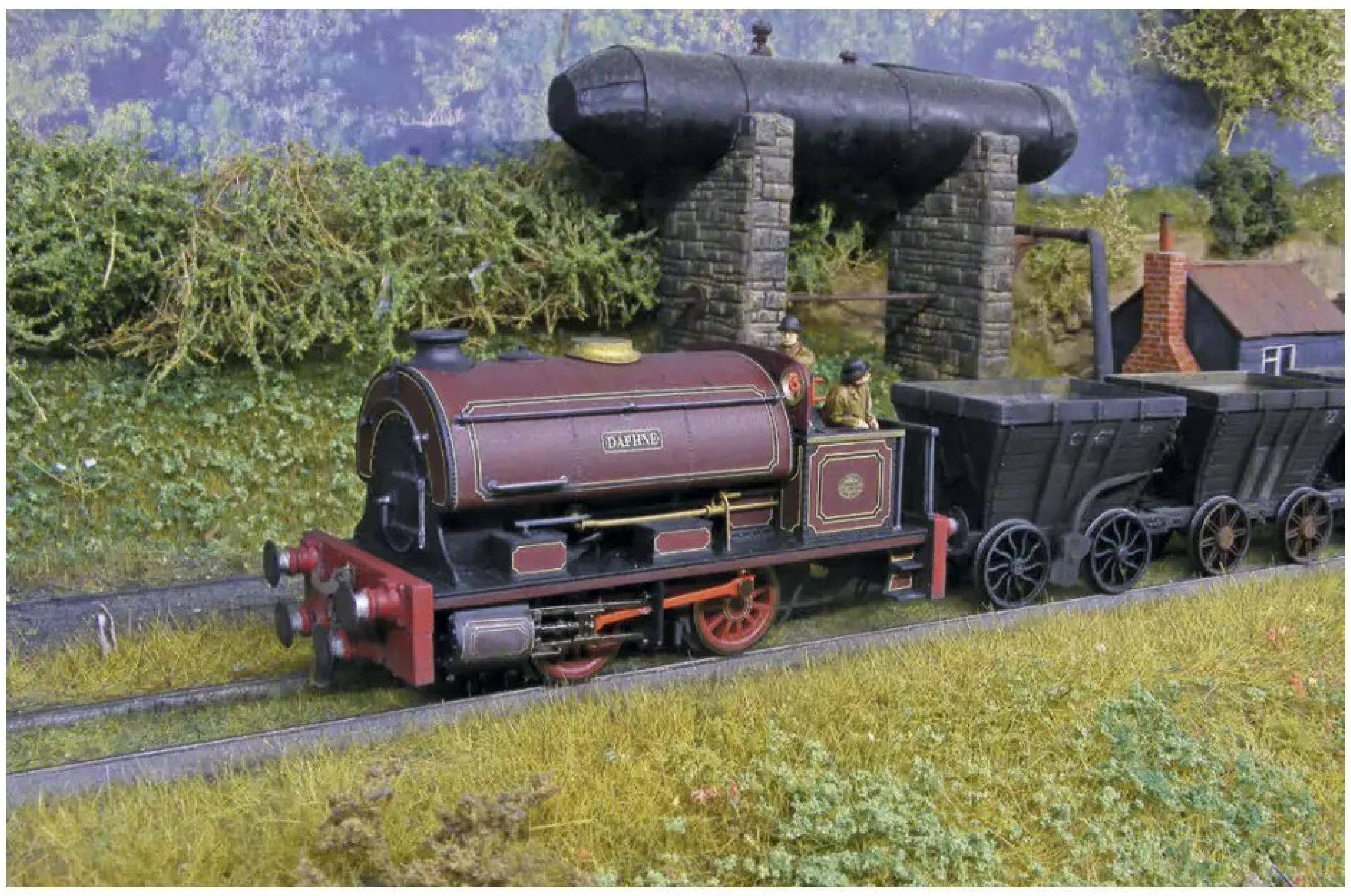
The smokebox front can be removed by first prising out the smokebox door, which is a tight push-fit. The front is a tight fit in the diecast smokebox but is secured by two glued tabs into the running plate. These rarely give up easily, and you may have to resort to cutting the front with a scalpel. Once free, the wings can be cut off using a scalpel or razor blade as the plastic is very soft.

Another small detail that seems to have disappeared in the 1920s are the reverse curves of the cylinder wrapper that come up to the running plate. These can be removed from the cylinders by filing them until the curve follows the rest of the cylinder.

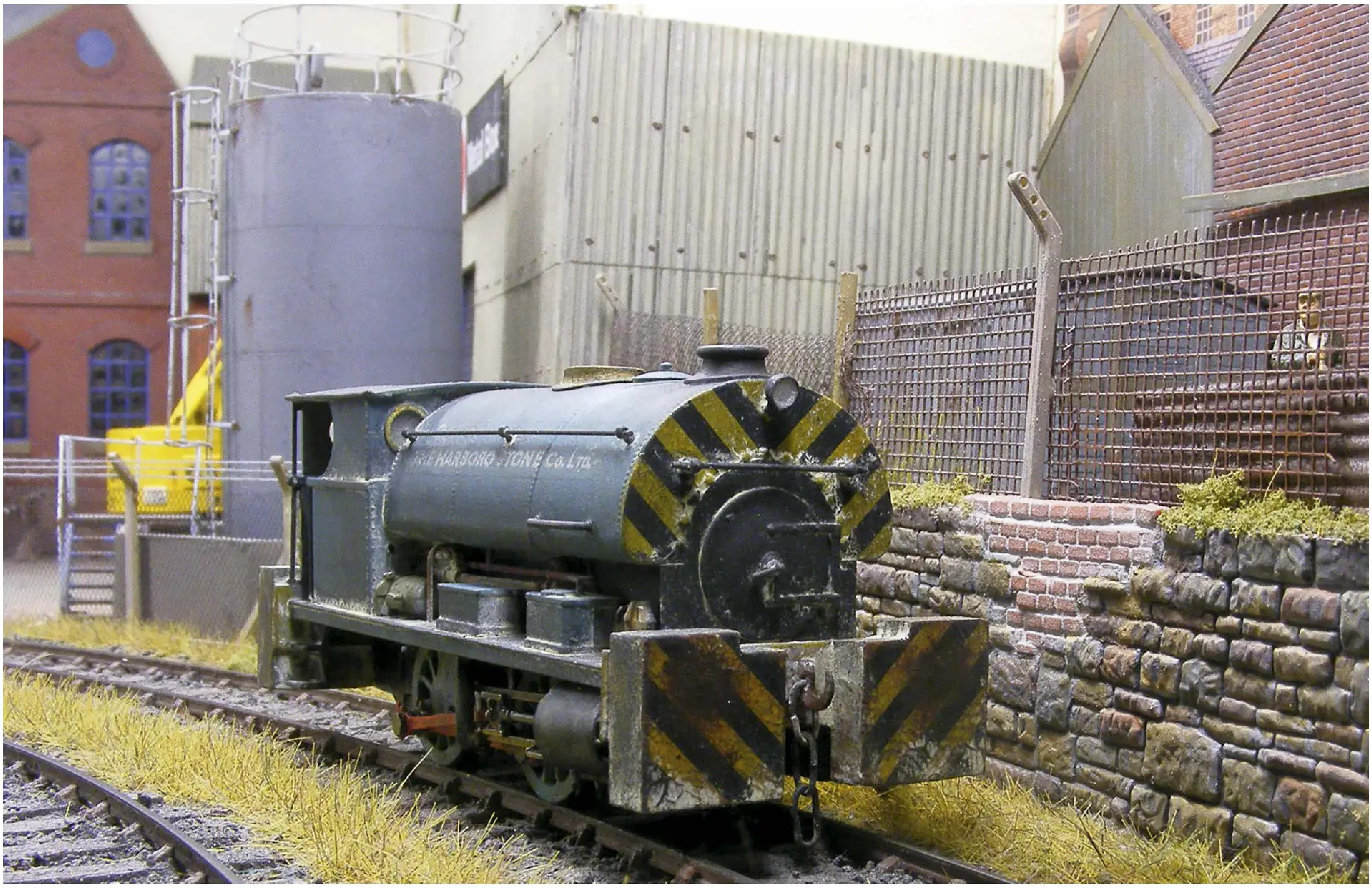
A change that can also be made is to the balance weights on the wheels. Later locomotives used crescent-shaped weights that are probably the most common type on any locomotive. To make these would require careful cutting and marking of Plastikard sheet, which isn't easy at all, but some later types, such as the W6 and W7, had wheels that had the weight cast, so as to completely take in several spokes. This variety can be produced by filling the spokes with plastic filler and then, once set, filing the surface flush with the face of the remaining exposed spokes.



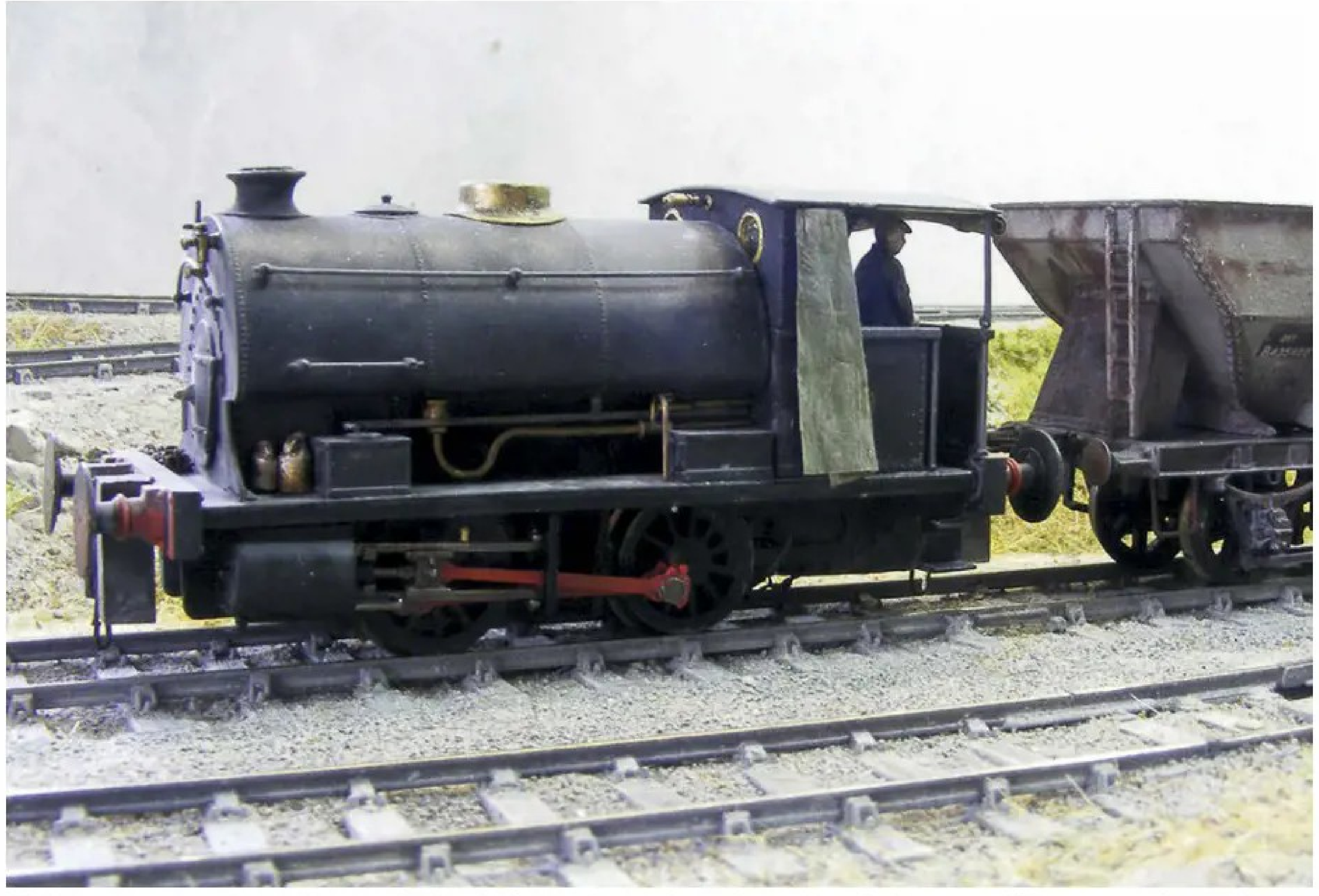
This was my first one. It started out as *Dodo* and has a dropped footplate and the chimney has been cut down. The dome/safety valve moulding was swapped from a PLA-liveried example, and the cab windows have been moved further toward the edges of the cab. Note the relocated Roscoe lubricator.



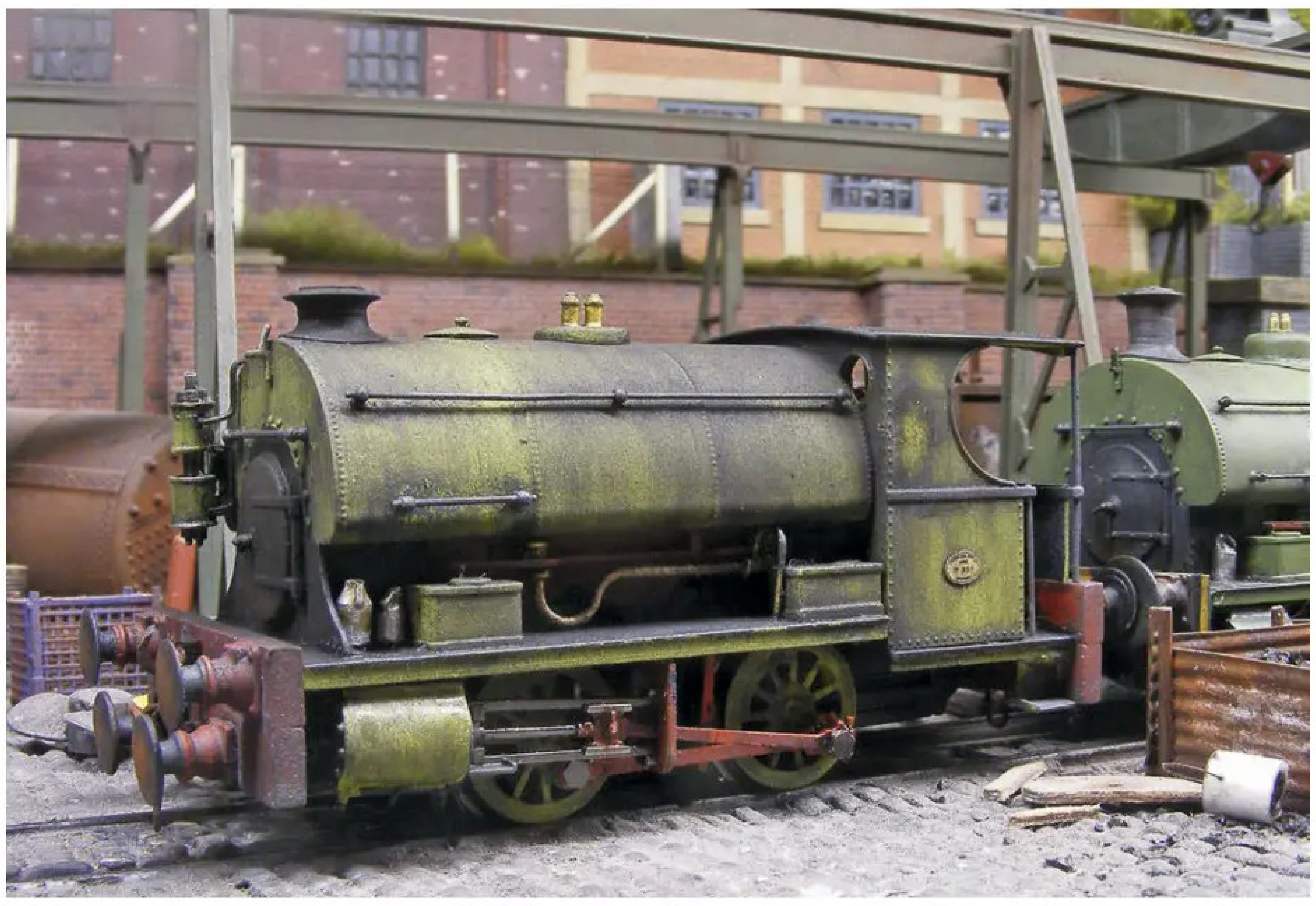
This completely cabless version was built for use on my 'Calder Vale Mineral Railway' layout. The boiler fittings are based on a prototype (Works number 668 of 1897) that was built for Bolckow Vaughan & Co. Ltd. for use at their South Bank steel works, in Middlesbrough. The entire cab upper was cut off and a weatherboard made from sheet brass.



Probably the most radical and involved conversion, this one also retains the original footplate but has had the cab lowered as far as the die-cast saddle tank will allow, and new cabside upper panels have been made and cut into the cab. New buffer beams have been made from Plastikard to represent items made from steel, rather than wood, and to these, a set of quite substantial block buffers have been added. They are made from laminated Plastikard and are based on a prototypical Peckett pattern. The wing plates on the smokebox have been removed and the more modern pattern of wheel balance weights have been represented by filling in spokes in the wheels. The chimney has been cut right down to the flare at its base, and what little of an actual chimney it has is a turned brass part. Inside the cab, the handbrake column has been shortened and at the cab rear, the corresponding bulge in the back sheet has been cut out and replaced in the appropriate position.



This one retains the original footplate but has had the roof lowered and the chimney has also been cut down. The tarpaulin hanging down the side of the cab would, on the prototype, be on a rail or some other contrivance so that it could be drawn across the cab entrance in bad weather. I made the tarp using nothing more than folded paper that was then painted and weathered. The upper section of the cab rear has been cut away, leaving only the handrail pillars to support it at the rear. Some of the latest variations of Hornby's W4 come with an open-backed cab, but conversions of older models, such as this, can be easily done using a scalpel.



This one began life as the MSC example and retains the original dome/ safety valves but with a substantial section removed to lower the height. An extra pair of buffer beams were grafted on below the existing ones and a second set of buffers added inboard of the existing ones and on the new beams. The new buffers are castings by RT Models, intended to be used with inside-framed wagons such as chaldrons. The apparatus on the front of the saddle tank is a Westinghouse pump. In this case, the compressed air supplied would not be for air brakes, but to open and close the doors on internal use wagons at a gasworks.

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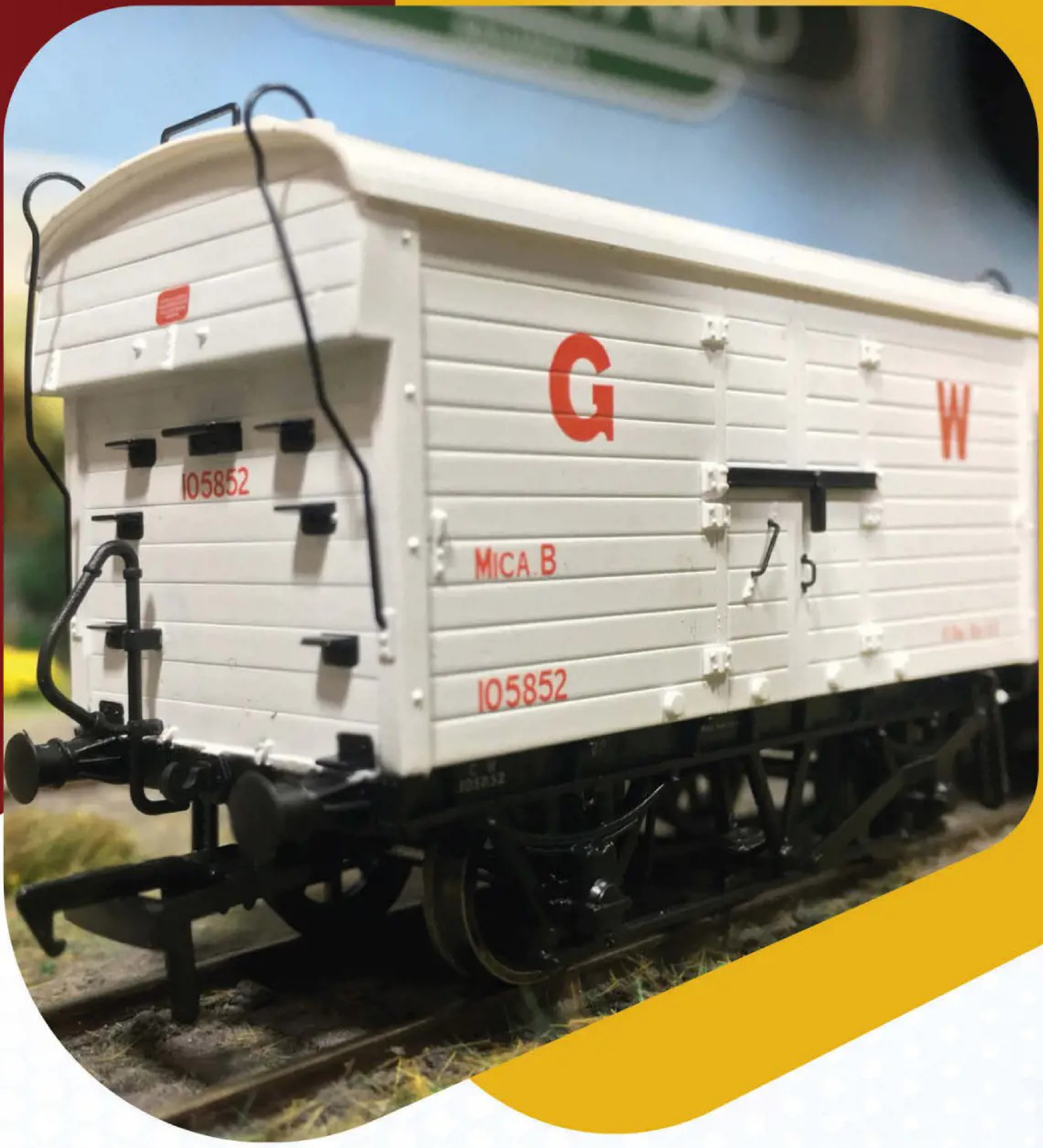
The decorated samples are now here and delivery is expected very soon



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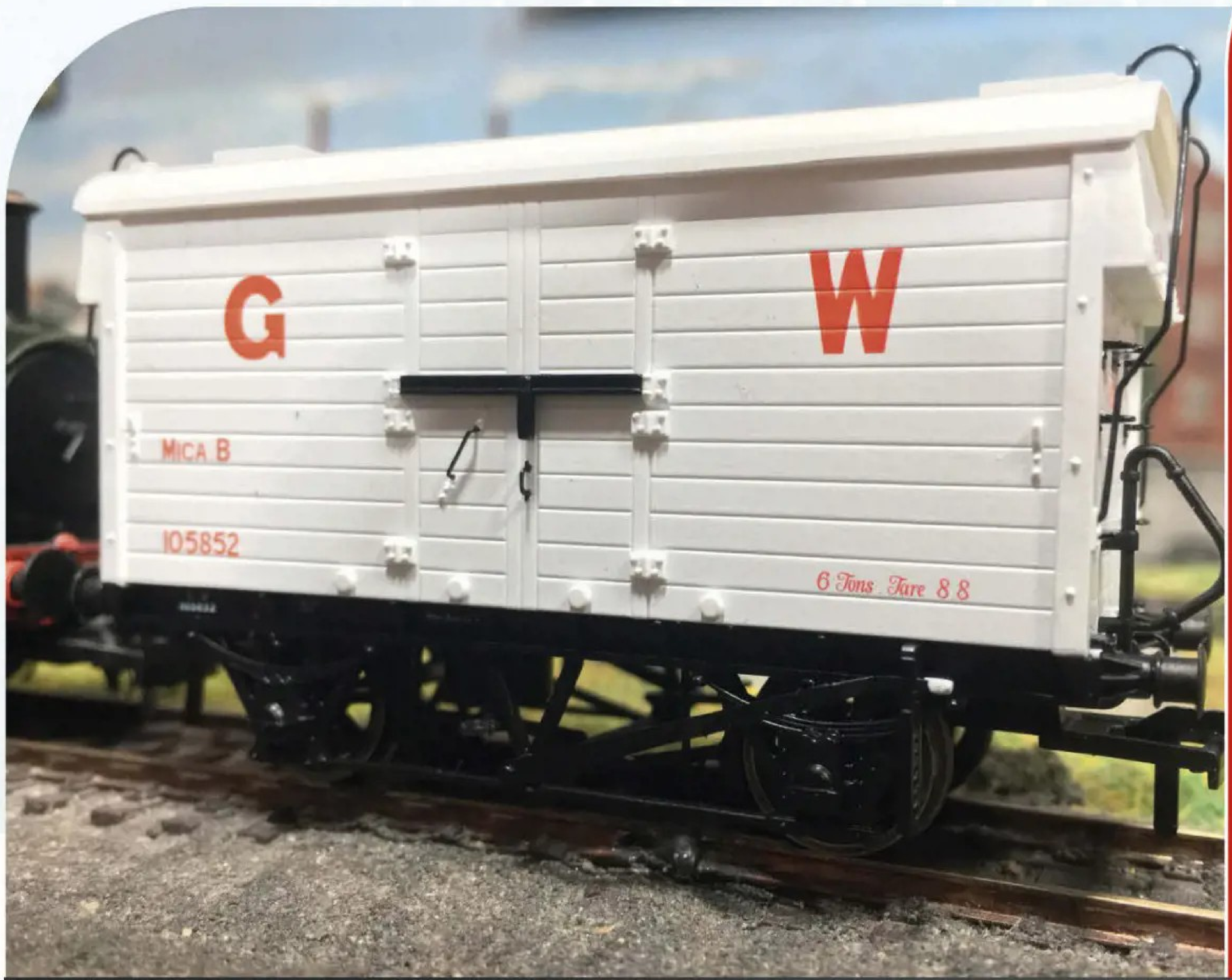

Van 1	105873 (preserved at Severn Valley Railway)
Van 2	105852
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Van 6	105923
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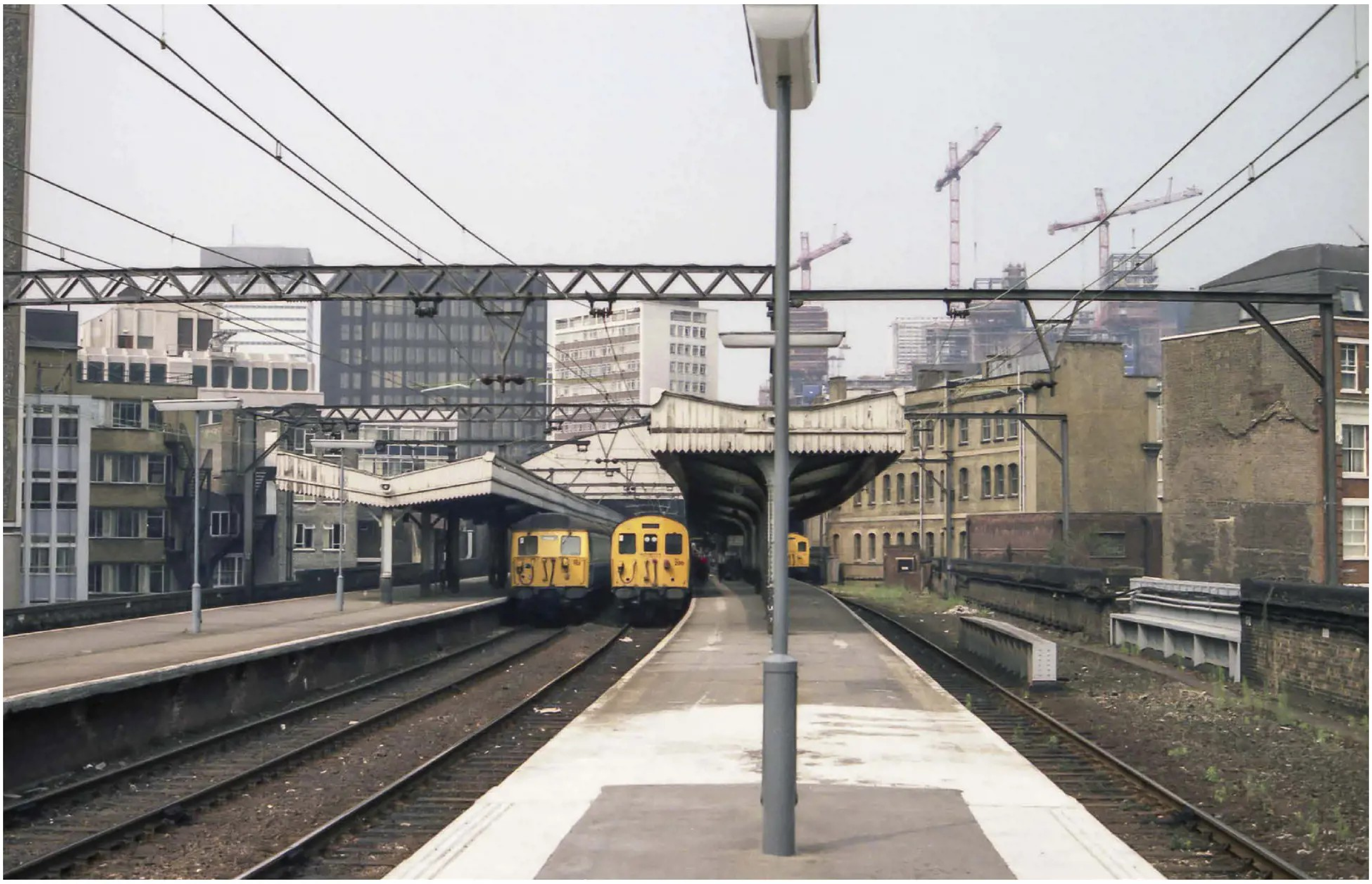
312783 breasts Bethnal Green Bank on the 12:05 Liverpool Street to Colchester working on August 15th, 1984. An AM9 heads into Liverpool Street on the Up Electric line.

Colchester
40
50

LONDON ROVER

By Andrew Overton

312
783
30
Passengers must not cross the line

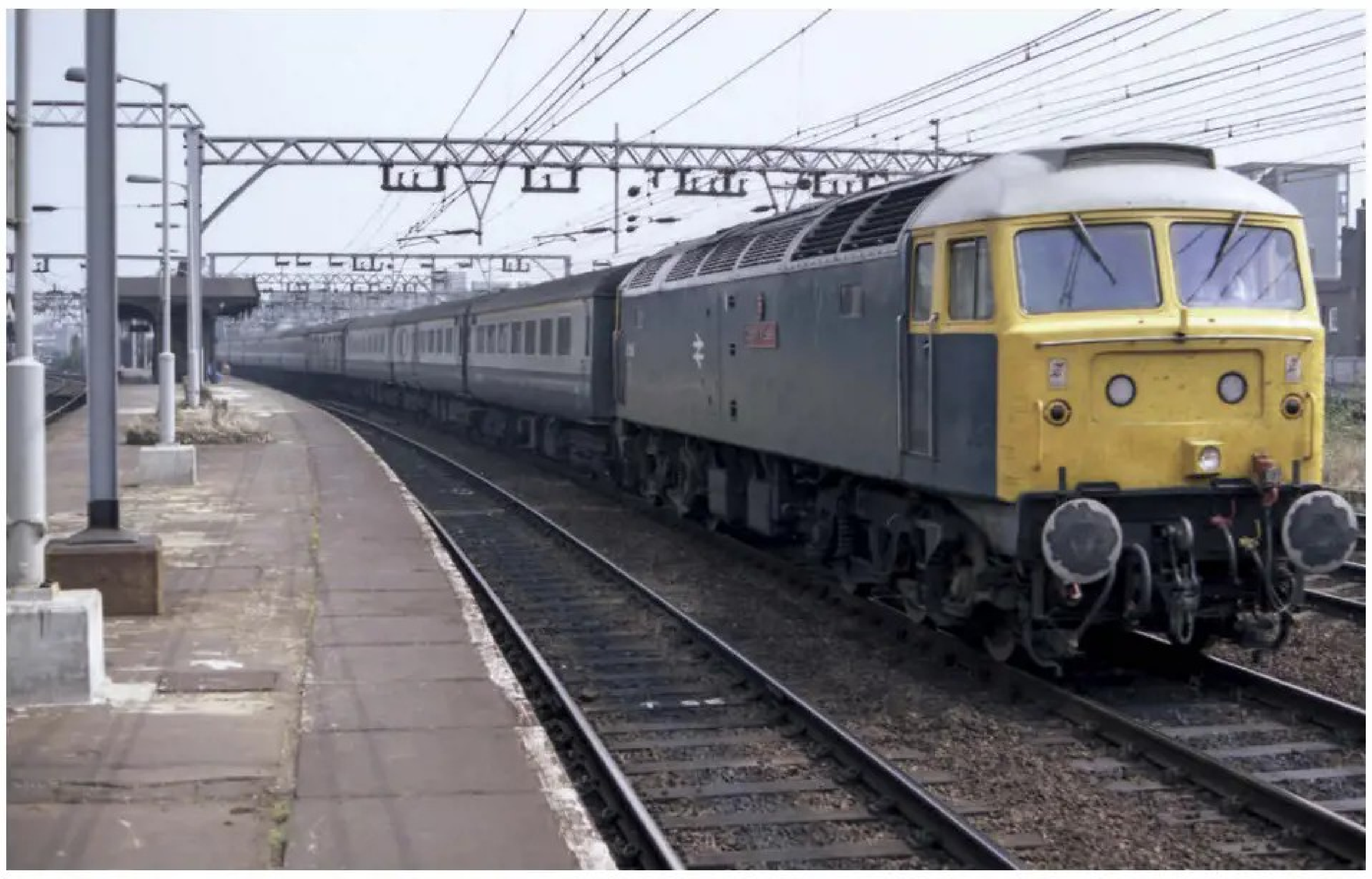


From left to right; 308152, 302295 and 302224 stand at Fenchurch Street in the mid-morning of August 15th, 1984.

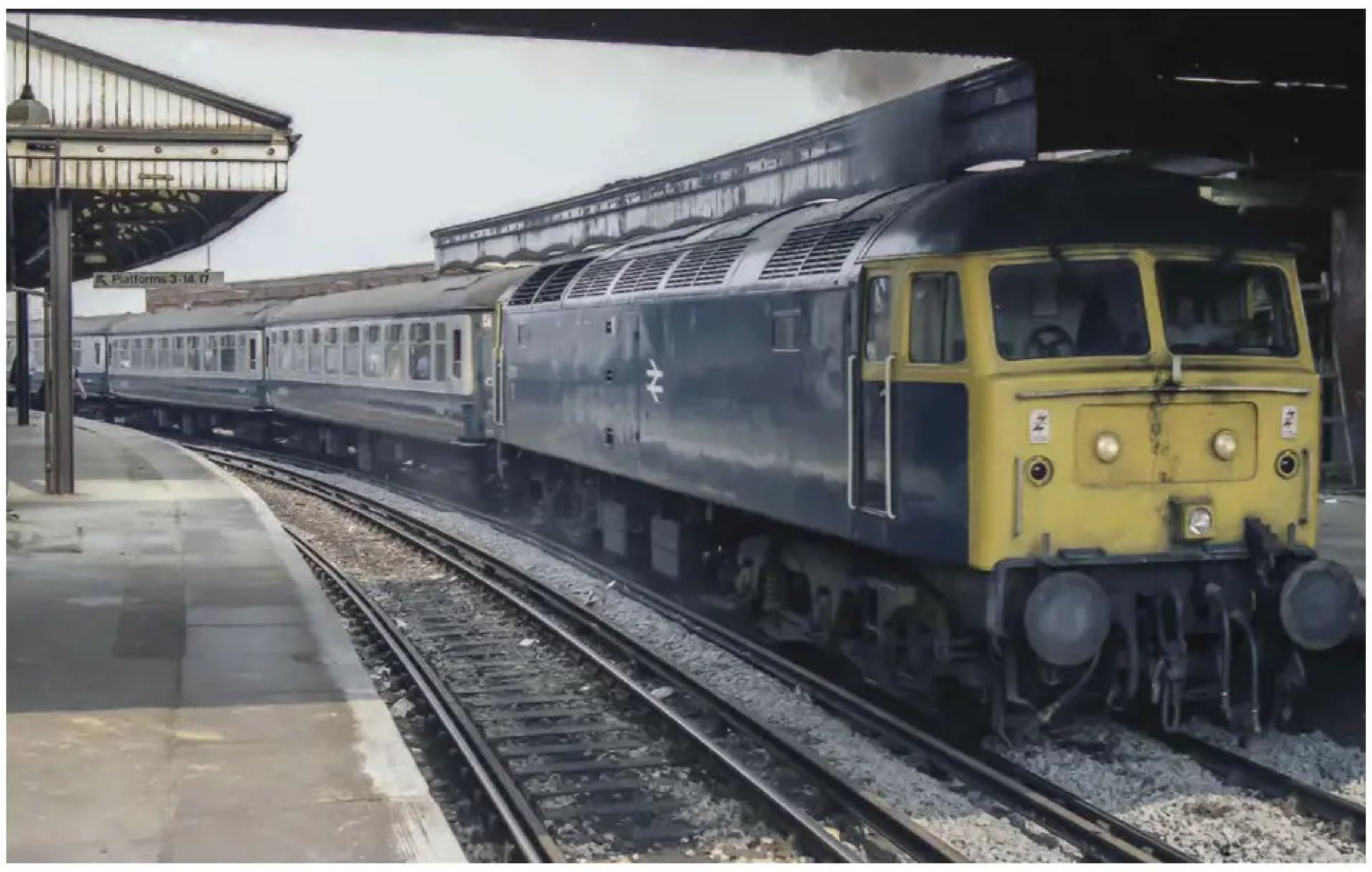
There can be few Traction readers who never spent a day around the London termini in the days of classic traction on the UK network. A good few articles have appeared over the years in railway periodicals, illustrated with photos from these visits, generally concentrating on loco-hauled services and bashes around various sheds. I've got my own fair share of photos from trips such as these, but at that period, I had a poor Instamatic camera that took variable photos – mostly variations on passable to rubbish. By the time I owned some decent equipment in the mid-1980s, the HST take-over was all over bar the shouting, with Paddington, Kings Cross and St Pancras all having fallen to the onslaught of fixed-formation train sets, which had driven out the vast majority of diesel-hauled services. As a result, I only ever visited London once to spend a day dedicated to photography around the centre, although I did take opportunist photos when passing through on other trips.

With hindsight, it was fortunate that my interest in railway photography extended further than the type of motive power employed, as otherwise, I would have shunned multiple units that provided a significant proportion of services into London on the various routes. These did indeed tend to be neglected by photographers who only belatedly started to record them in earnest quite late in their lives. In this article, I hope to give a flavour of a day around a few of the London stations in 1984/5, which might bring back memories of sights that we often took for granted and barely noticed at this period.

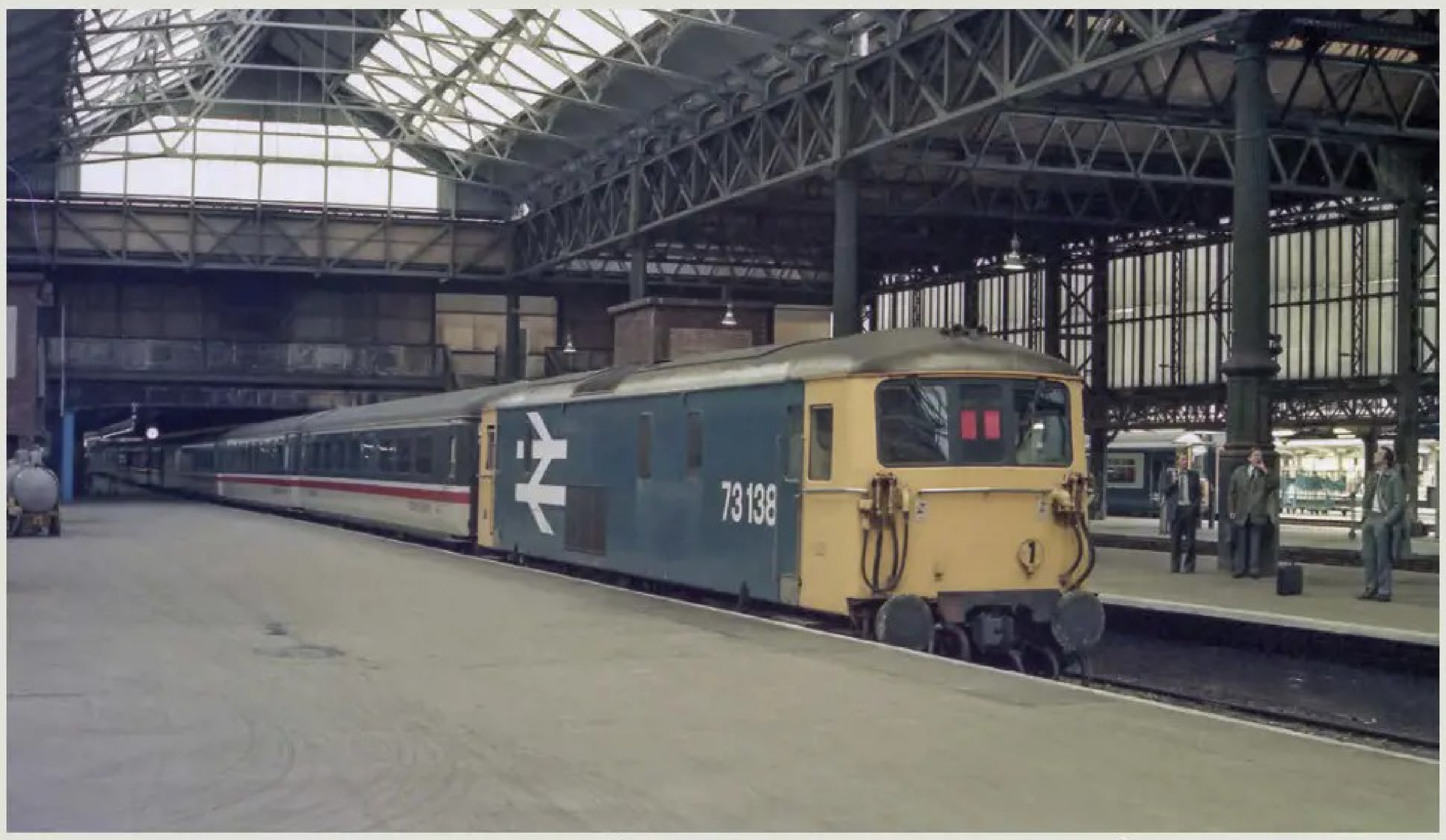
August 15th, 1984, was a beautiful hot summer's day, perfect for photography. I can't remember if I had a plan for the day or whether I just made it up as I went along but certainly, I would have been trying to capture something a little different. And so it was that I first found myself at Fenchurch Street, knowing that all I was going to see



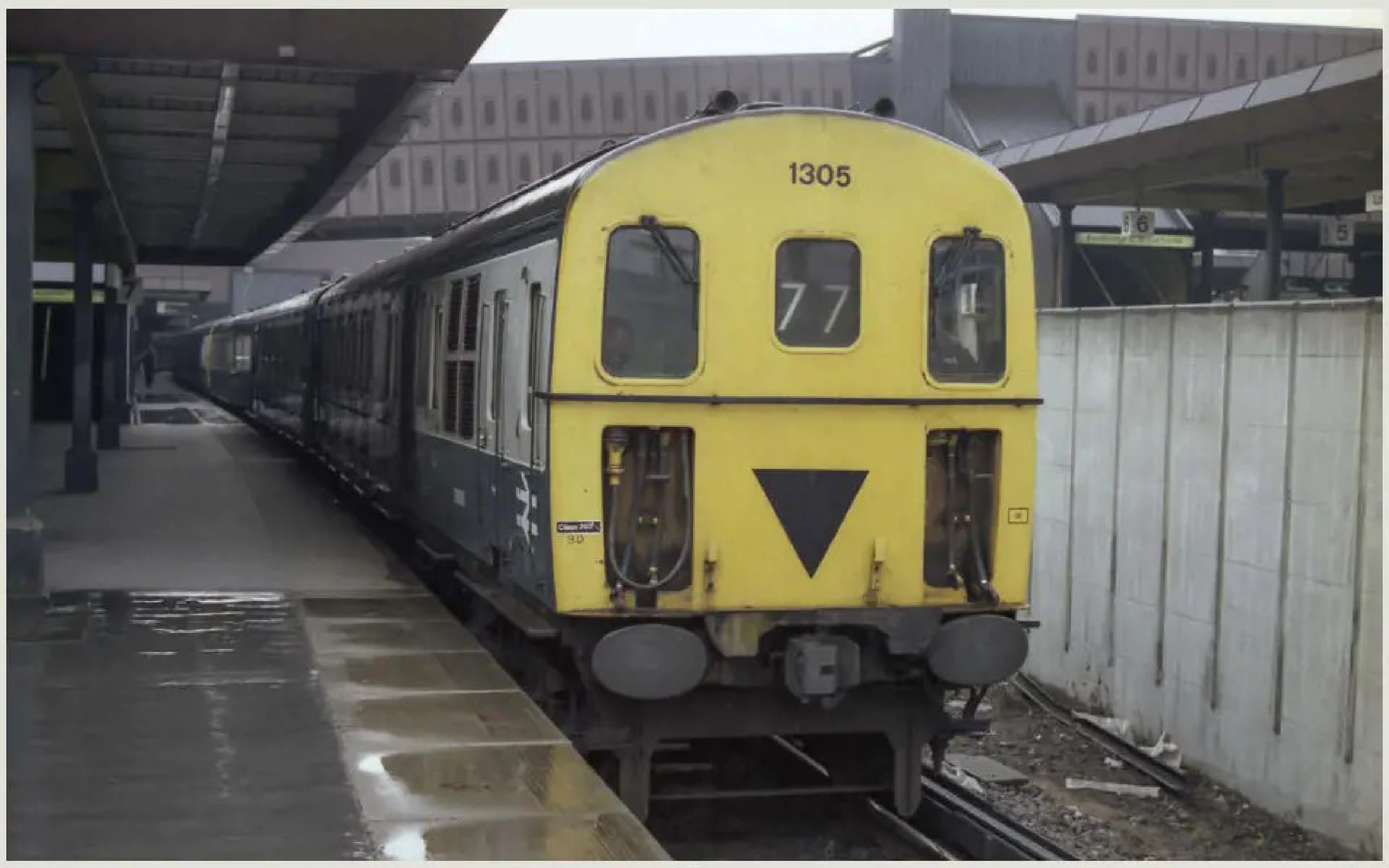
The swansong of silver-roofed Stratford Class 47s on the Norwich route as 47580 *County of Essex* heads 1C43 10:17 Norwich to Liverpool Street on the Up Main past Bethnal Green on August 15th, 1984, running 25 minutes late.



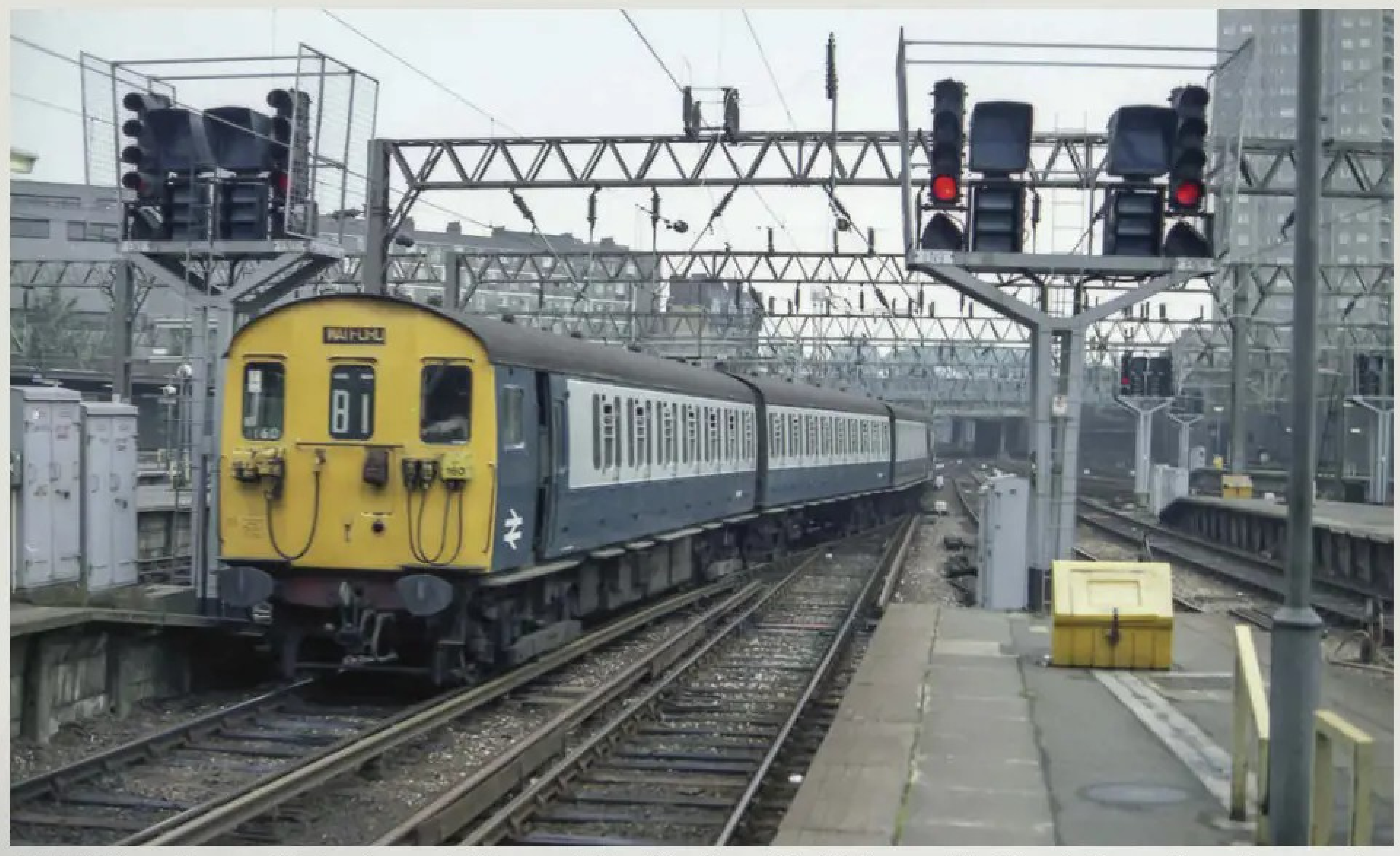
With a fresh Southern Region driver on board, 47567 restarts from Clapham Junction on full throttle hauling 1O74 09:58 Manchester Piccadilly to Brighton on August 15th, 1984.



73138 waits at London Victoria to form 1D62 17:45 Victoria to Gatwick Airport on April 3rd, 1985.



A thunderstorm hits London Bridge as Class 207 1305 gets ready to leave with the 16:10 service to East Grinstead on August 15th, 1984.

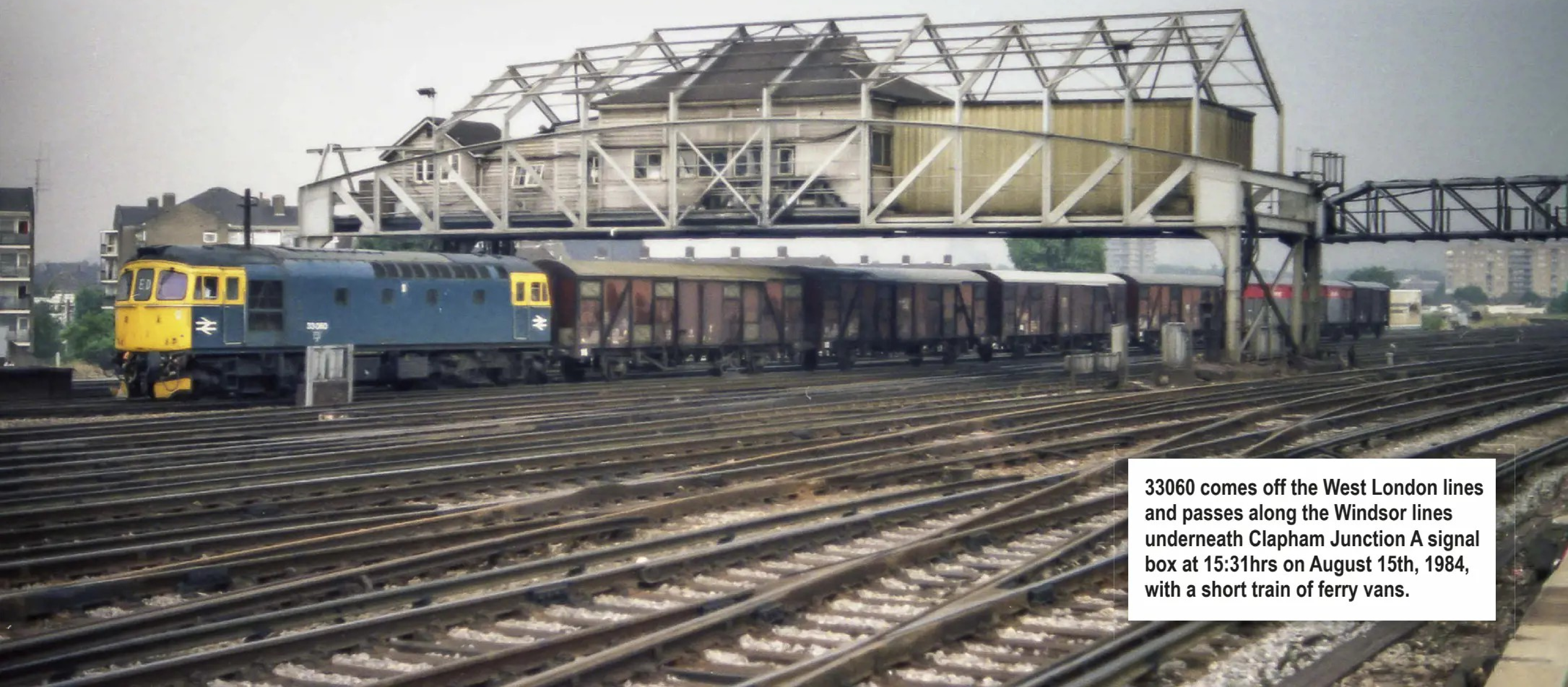


501160 arrives at Euston platform 10 with the 16:12 from Watford Junction (wrongly displaying its originating station on the destination blind) on August 15th, 1984.

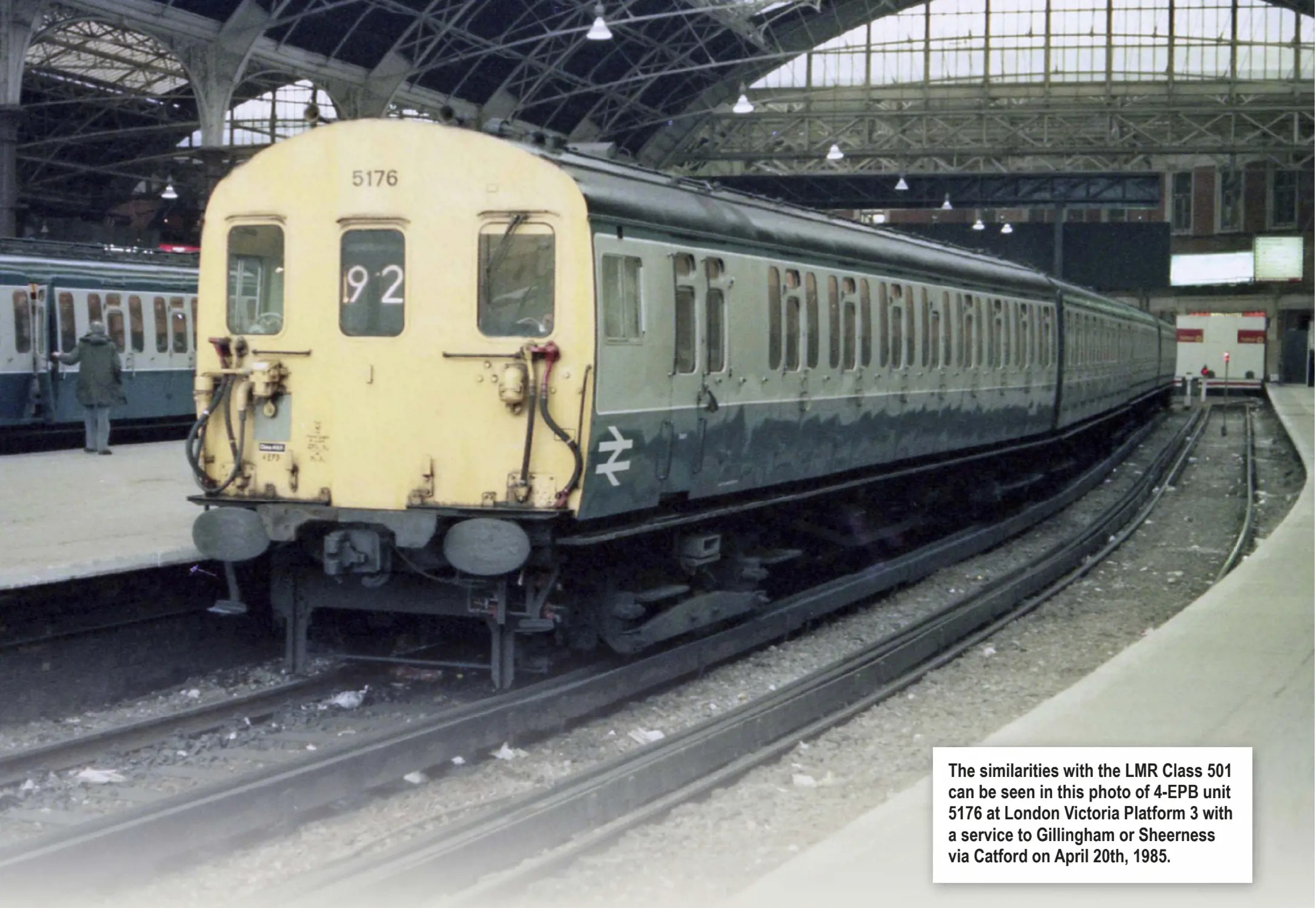
was EMUs. At this period, Classes 302 and 308 were to be found here: the former were the old AM2 units built by BREL at York and Doncaster between 1958 and 1960 for the AC electrification of the LT&S lines, although also used on the GE routes out of Liverpool Street. Based on a Mark 1 bodyshell, they certainly hadn't received much attention from the aesthetics department of the BR design team with their slab fronts, common on Southern Region stock. By the time of my visit, their demise was on the cards, to be replaced by cascaded refurbished AM10/Class 310 units from the London Midland Region (LMR). The Class 308s were the former AM8 units, built by BREL between 1959 and 1961 at York for services out of both Liverpool Street and Fenchurch Street, and were basically an updated version of the AM2 with improved front-end styling. By 1984, they had been refurbished for continued service.

Looking at the photo I took on that day, we can see the sort of everyday mid-1980s BR scene that we knew and loved: the station, not very different from what it would have been in steam days, with wooden slightly tired station canopies giving the impression of steam traction not long departed, despite the electrification. Passengers clatter in and out of slam-door stock as they have done for decades, but we can see on the skyline that Britain is changing, the cranes above the City of London heralding investment and development here as traditional heavy industry elsewhere was closing down: the miners' strike is in full swing. Not that much of this development reached Fenchurch Street for a long time and it continued to decay for many more years until modernisation finally came along, latterly being dubbed the Misery Line.

I don't seem to have taken any shots at Liverpool Street, but apart from platform end views, it was never a place for photo opportunities. I must have caught a suburban service to Bethnal Green as my next photos are from the Down Main platform, which gave a good view of services on the lines to and from Stratford. At this date, the 1949 signalling and track layouts on the GE Main Line (GEML) were still in use, with complicated switches and crossings at Bethnal Green. Overhead wires were to the original Mk.1 catenary design, with two supporting wires above the contact wire, as on the LT&S at Fenchurch Street. The station presented an air of slow decay and was bereft of passengers besides myself, most presumably using London Underground services or the buses in preference to heavy rail. It was strange to be on a station in the middle of the East End at the height of the day and be alone apart from a few chaps working on the track, but this was not unusual in the BR era.



33060 comes off the West London lines and passes along the Windsor lines underneath Clapham Junction A signal box at 15:31hrs on August 15th, 1984, with a short train of ferry vans.



The similarities with the LMR Class 501 can be seen in this photo of 4-EPB unit 5176 at London Victoria Platform 3 with a service to Gillingham or Sheerness via Catford on April 20th, 1985.

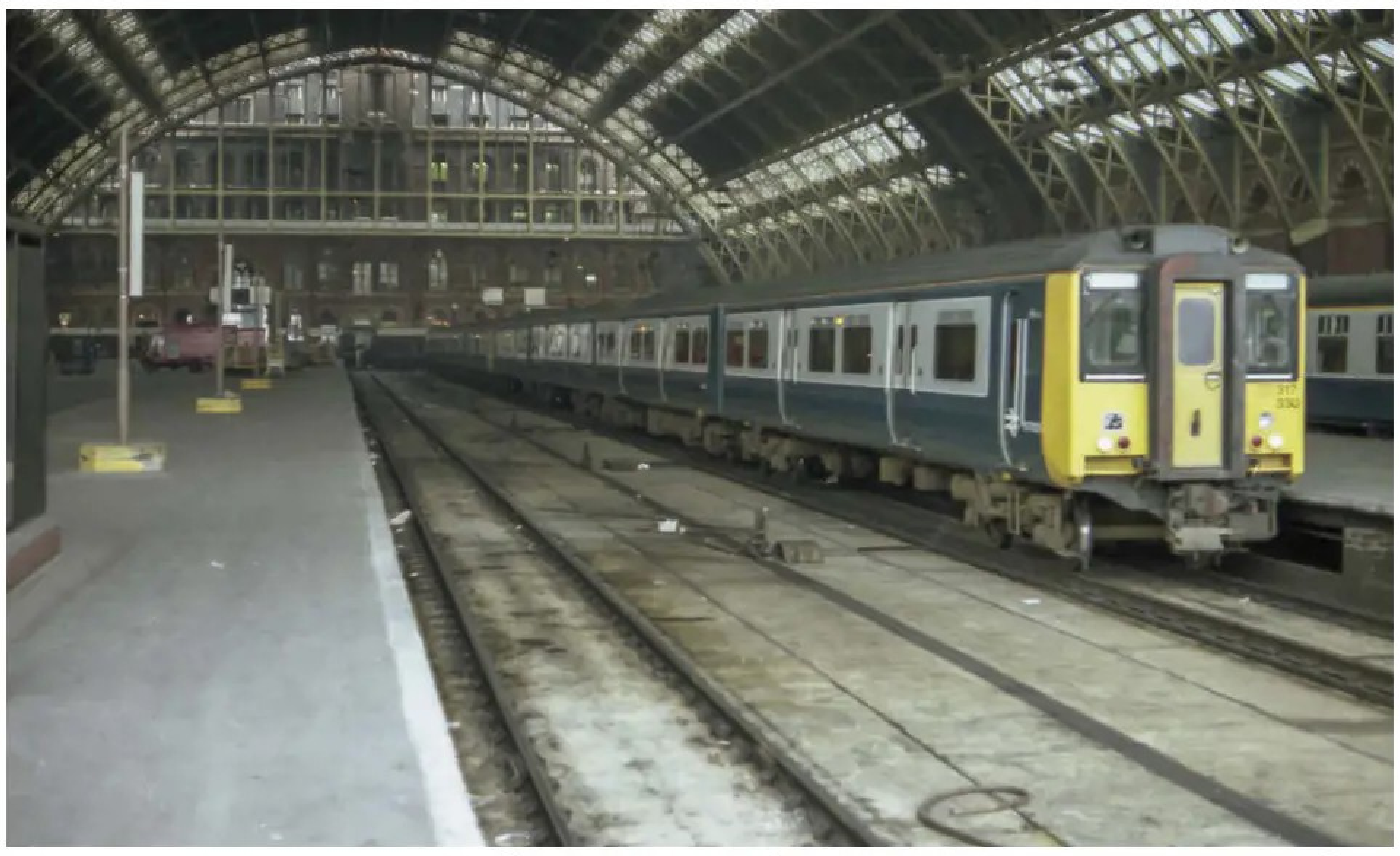
Traffic again was mostly EMUs, with more modern Class 312/1 units built by BREL at York for GEML services between 1975 and 1978, based on a Mk. 2 bodyshell, passing by. Unrefurbished Class AM9/309 'Clacton Express' units could also be seen, now with four cars, having originally been built as two-car units in 1962/3 and later with refurbished loco-hauled Mk.1 coaches inserted into the formation. But it wasn't all units, as there were diesel-hauled services on both the Cambridge, King's Lynn and Norwich services in the hands of Class 47s, and the station provided an excellent vantage point. Trains into Liverpool Street were coasting the last few miles, but those in the Down direction were working hard, exhaust curving high in the air, turbo-chargers screaming, as they crested the summit of the incline from a standing start. This was the last full year of Class 47s on the Norwich expresses past Bethnal Green, with electrification to Ipswich bringing Class 86 haulage from the start of the May 1985 timetable; on the Cambridge route, May 1987 saw diesels ousted.

The afternoon found me at Clapham Junction. If you wanted to see EMUs, this was the place to be, but I was in search of something a little different in the form of the loco-hauled services that passed through. At this date, Table 51 cross-country services to the south coast passed through the station, stopping in platforms 16 and 17 on the West London lines on the extreme east side of the station to change between LMR and Southern Region (SR) crews. Trains bound for the coast had to be worked hard on restarting as they needed to quickly get up to speed to fit into the intensive traffic in this area, hampered by the relatively slow rate of acceleration compared to EMU stock, leading to an impressive amount of thrash and clag. The black station awnings on these platforms bore witness to this. Freight traffic could also produce locos coming off the West London lines, some of which passed along the Windsor lines instead, on the other side of the station.

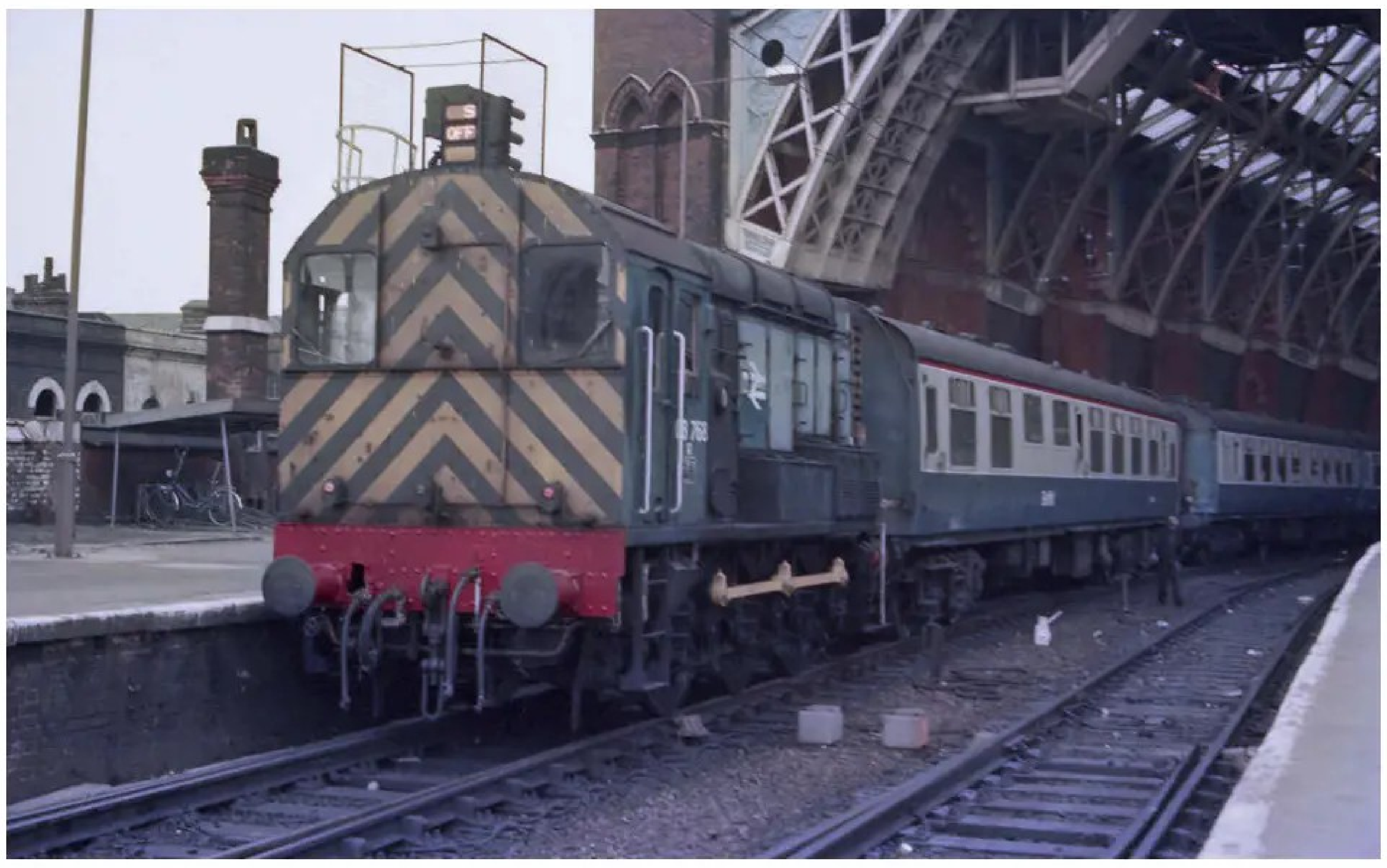
With the May 1984 timetable, loco-hauled trains through Clapham Junction were increased enormously when the Gatwick Express services from London Victoria went over to Class 73 operation with Mark 2f stock, with a converted Guard's Luggage Van (GLV) at the opposite end to the loco to form a push-pull set. There were initial problems with excessive arcing from the collector shoes of the locomotives over conductor rail gaps before modifications were made, and during my 1984 visit, these impressive pyrotechnics were much in evidence.

In typical British summer fashion, the day was about to end with thunderstorms and by mid-afternoon, it had become hazy. I decided to head into central London again as it was beginning to look rather black south of the river, and on arriving at London Bridge, the rain had started. Services on the Uckfield and East Grinstead routes mostly ran to and from London Victoria, but in the morning and evening peak services additionally ran to and from London Bridge. By 1984, these were almost exclusively in the hands of Class 207 'Thumpers', the last of the SR DEMUs, built in 1962 and based on a Mark 1 coach, and I was lucky to arrive in time to capture one of these. With the rain hampering further photography, I headed back to the Tube to escape northwards.

Euston was the epitome of BR modernisation, with diesel traction banished. Electric locomotives roared and whined in and out all day, supplemented by AM10/Class 310 EMUs on stopping services. What was often overlooked at Euston was the DC electrified lines to Watford Junction, which were still the preserve of Class 501 EMUs and which predated the rebuilding of the station and the AC electrification.



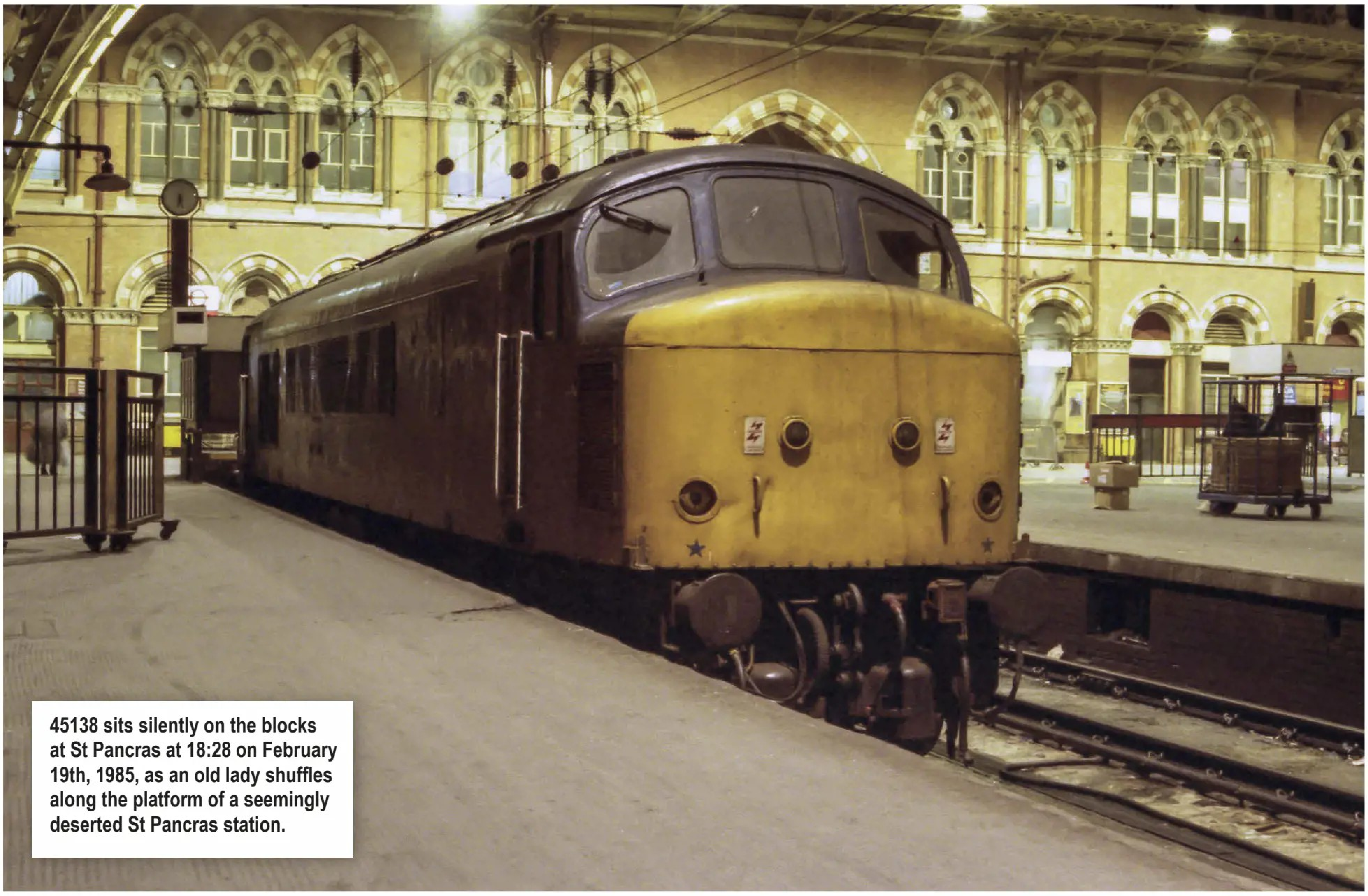
317330 and 317338 stand in St Pancras platform 4 with the 17:28 departure for Bedford on August 15th, 1984. One of the two weekday peak-hours loco-hauled services to Nottingham can be seen on the adjacent platform.



08768 has brought a rake of Mk. 1 stock for an unknown service into St Pancras platform 7 at dusk on April 3rd, 1985 and now leaves with the Mk. 1 RMB, which was on the rear. With no obvious services to form, the reason for this move is unknown.

Manufactured in 1955-56 and based on a Mark 1 coach, they more closely resembled SR stock, being based on EPB units. They had originally used 4th rail pick-up but were later converted to 3rd rail and, by the time of my visit, had less than a year left in service on this route due to replacement by Class 313s. Once this happened, the DC lines became homogenous with the rest of the Euston scene. Although still hot and humid, the showers had passed through here, so I was able to spend a little time recording these services before thinking about walking to Kings Cross, via St Pancras.

After a protracted dispute with drivers over driver-only operation, culminating in an ultimatum from the BR Chairman, new Class 317 EMUs had been introduced out of St Pancras on suburban services to Bedford and finally entered service in March 1983. Manufactured by BREL at Derby and York, they were based on a Mark 3 bodyshell and had sliding doors. I always used to call in at St Pancras before catching a train home from King's Cross, as loco-hauled services had all but ceased from the latter by this time. As well as 'Peaks' on express services, the elderly Class 127 diesel-hydraulic units could be seen belching in and out on the Bedfords, leaving clouds of fumes in their wake, but by 1983, this was all gone. Express services had almost exclusively gone over to HST operation with the May timetable, with just 1D54 16:35 and 1D55 17:35 St Pancras to Nottingham services still in the hands of locomotives on weekday daytime departures, and the 00:05 running as 1E99 to Sheffield SuO, plus 1P03 to Derby M-S (from 1984 1E06 to Sheffield MO) for the insomniac basher. Occasionally, the station pilot could be seen moving some stock in or out of the platforms, but this was now a rare sight, as was the presence of a loco stabled under the train shed. Yet another station had succumbed to bland uniformity but at least domestic passengers from St Pancras hadn't yet been exiled halfway to Dock Junction and could enjoy the splendour of the original station. That would come, but for now, it was time to head home.



45138 sits silently on the blocks at St Pancras at 18:28 on February 19th, 1985, as an old lady shuffles along the platform of a seemingly deserted St Pancras station.

NAPIER NOISE

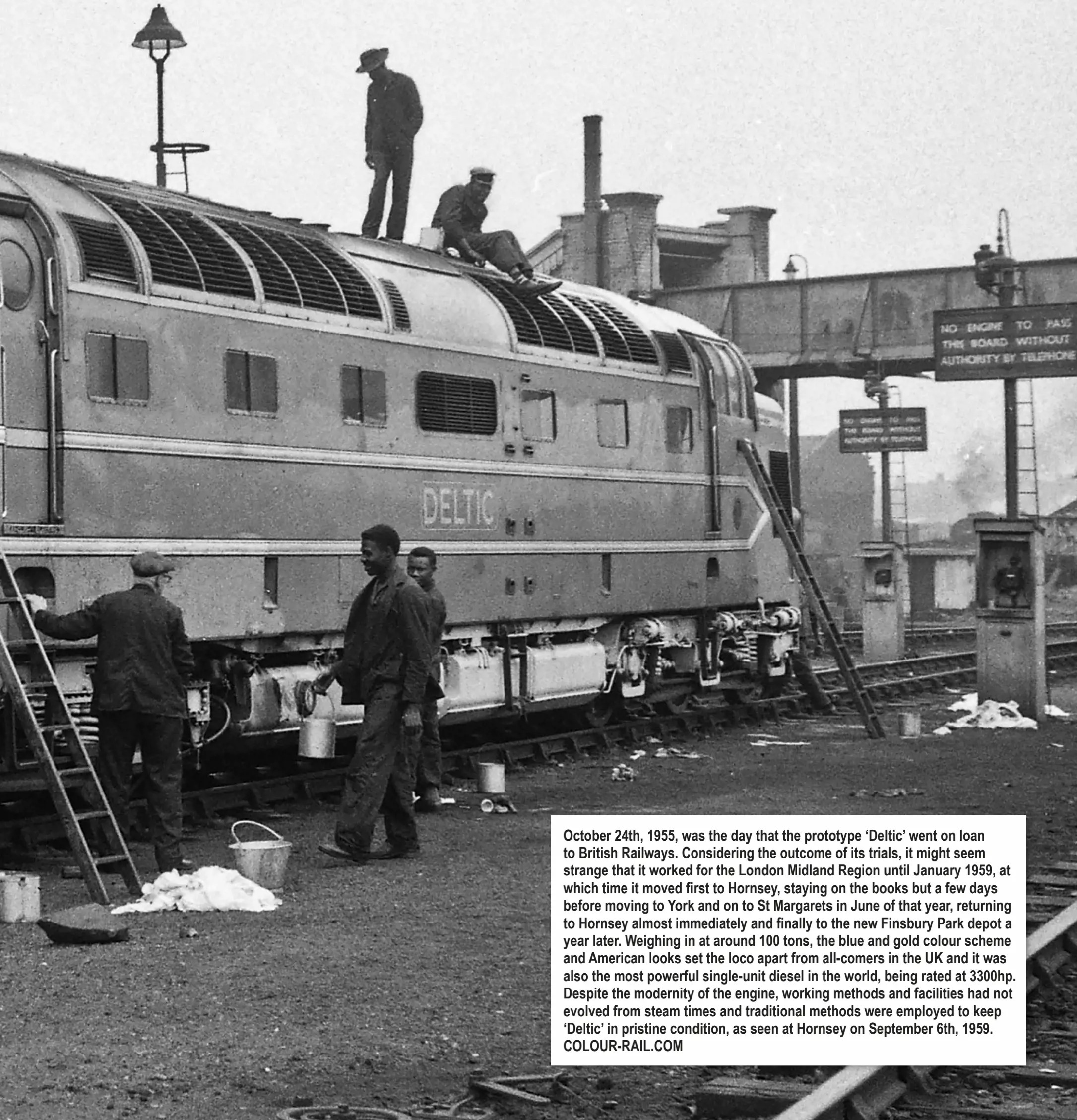
By J Crosse

Mobil
NOT TO BE MOVED
ENGLISH ELECTRIC

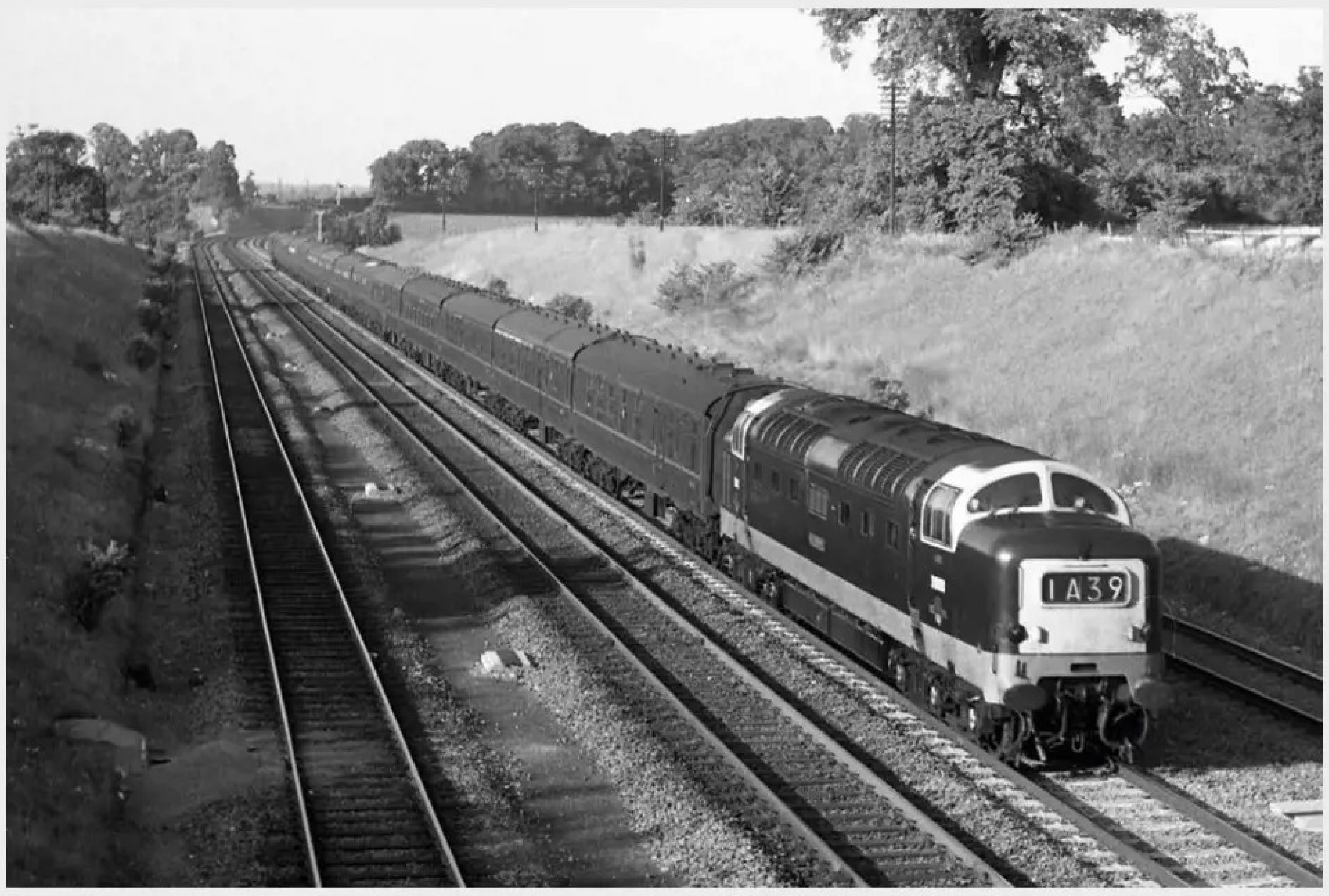
Everything about the story concerning the arrival of the 'Deltics' for East Coast duties sets them apart from other traction of the time. The line from King's Cross to Edinburgh had always been the focus for high speed running, and while the West Coast route had always sought to compete, its engineering and the weight of its trains would always put it at a disadvantage in steam times. While 'one off' runs could match East Coast performance, the latter was serving up high speed travel on at least a couple of its services day in and day out, very much helped by the racehorse-like Gresley-designed A4 Pacifics.

When it came to modernisation and the replacement of steam, BR proposals seemed to ignore 'special cases' and deliver the same level of blandness throughout. Thus, the vision in 1955 was that 2000hp diesels could deliver an adequate daily service and that there was no ambition away from West Coast electrification to offer the public an improved service. Fortunately, the Eastern Region management had a different vision for its premier passenger services, wanting to at least match A4 performances and even better them while providing many more high-speed services on a daily basis. With no provision in the modernisation plan for suitable locomotives, attention was turned elsewhere.

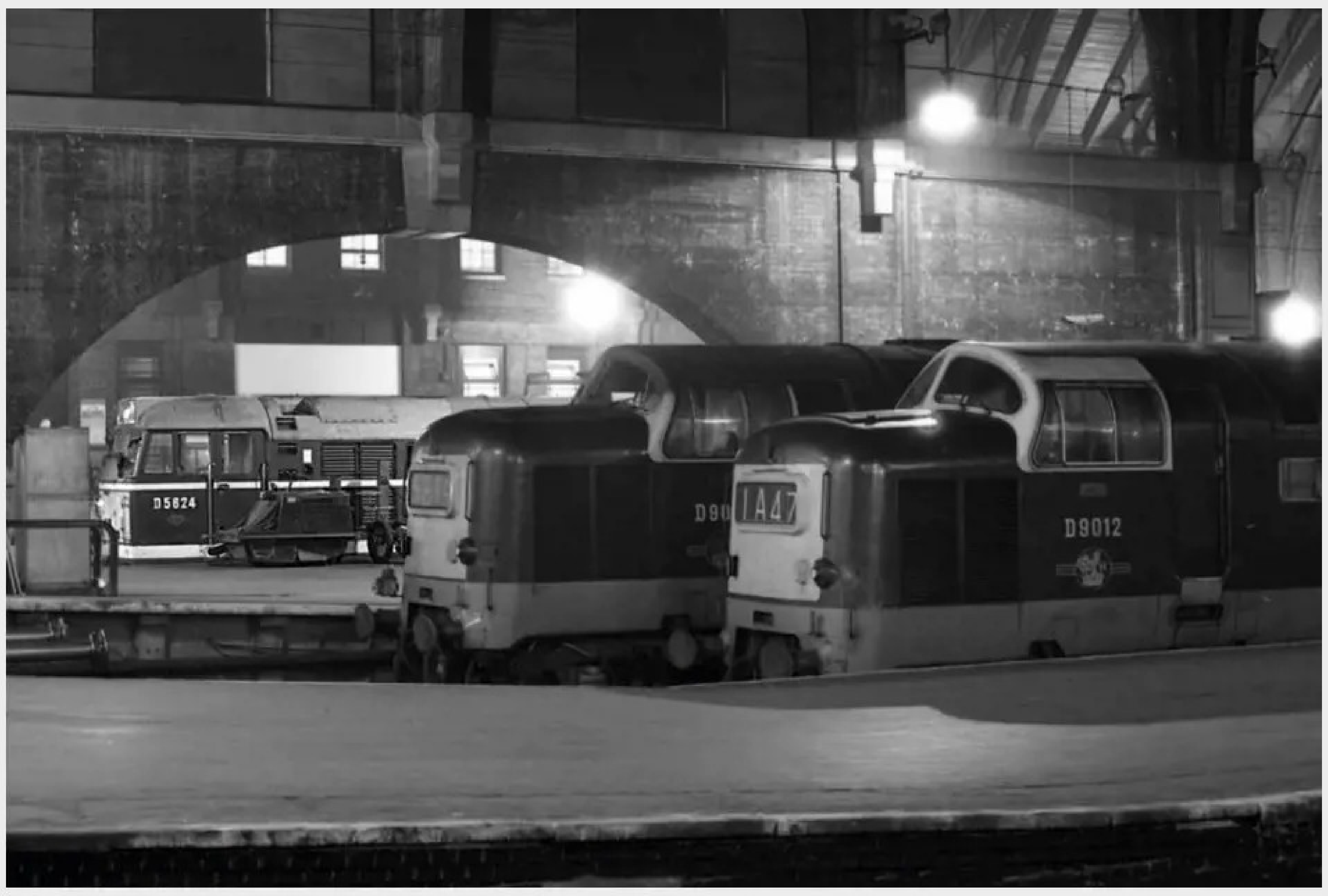
At almost the same time that BR were publicising its plans, English Electric brought out their diesel prototype DP1, much better known as 'Deltic'. The development of the locomotive was a private venture and the loco was only ever on loan to British Railways. Despite Nationalisation, the railway regions still had some autonomy and thus, in due course, the Eastern Region was granted permission to order 22 production machines, the first arriving in 1961. The rest, as they say, is history.



October 24th, 1955, was the day that the prototype 'Deltic' went on loan to British Railways. Considering the outcome of its trials, it might seem strange that it worked for the London Midland Region until January 1959, at which time it moved first to Hornsey, staying on the books but a few days before moving to York and on to St Margarets in June of that year, returning to Hornsey almost immediately and finally to the new Finsbury Park depot a year later. Weighing in at around 100 tons, the blue and gold colour scheme and American looks set the loco apart from all-comers in the UK and it was also the most powerful single-unit diesel in the world, being rated at 3300hp. Despite the modernity of the engine, working methods and facilities had not evolved from steam times and traditional methods were employed to keep 'Deltic' in pristine condition, as seen at Hornsey on September 6th, 1959. COLOUR-RAIL.COM

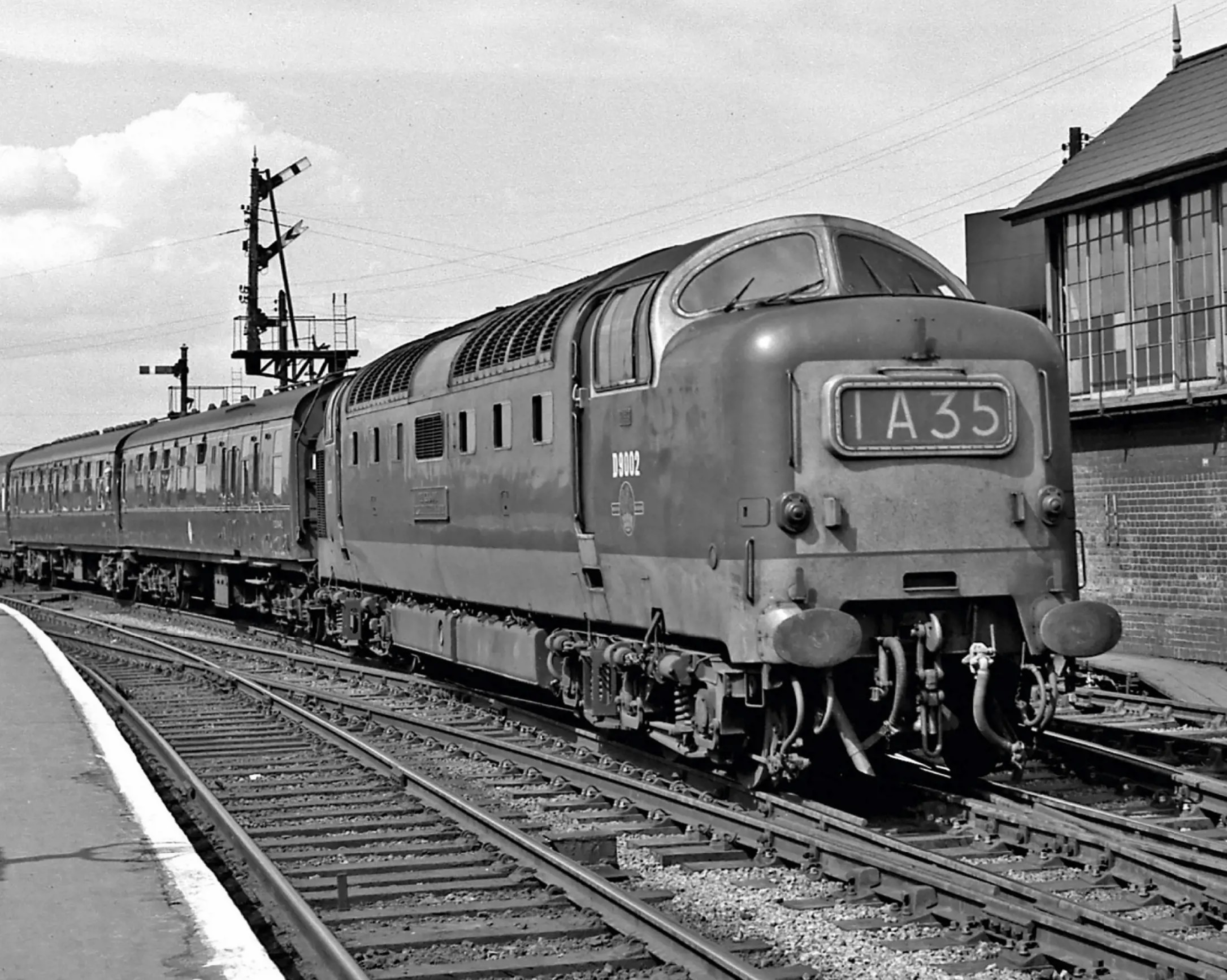


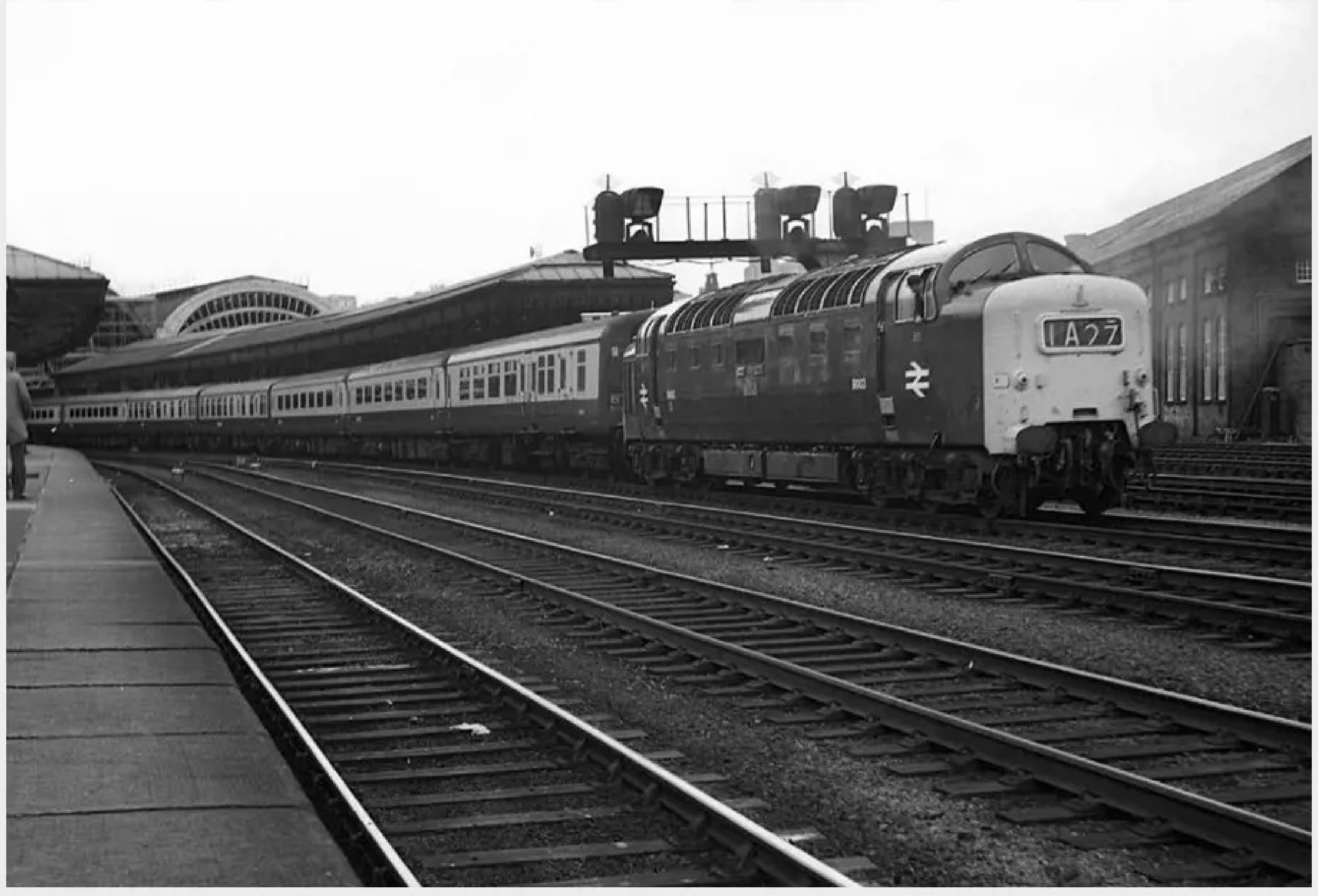
The first livery change saw the appearance of sizeable yellow panel ends, and these are clearly seen on an immaculate D9001 near St Neots on September 12th, 1964. While it was nominally new on February 23rd, 1961, it was March 6th before it reached its home of Finsbury Park. The London-allocated machines were quickly named and D9001 became *St. Paddy* on July 7th, 1961, while in Doncaster works. Most of the class remained at the same depot almost to the end of their duties, but during air braking modifications brief swaps were made and it spent seven months at Haymarket starting at the end of 1967. K FAIREY/COLOUR-RAIL.COM



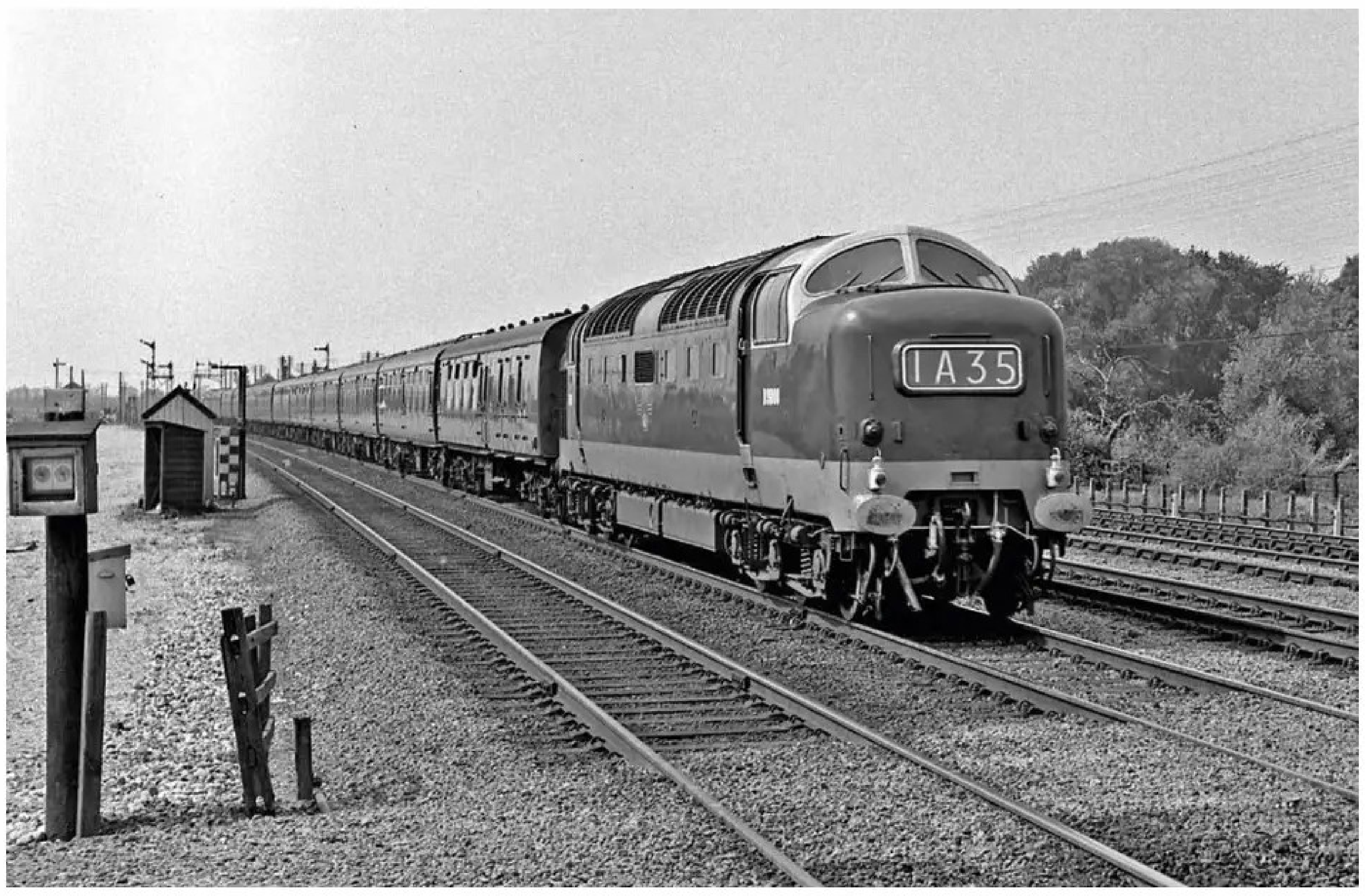
The roof of King's Cross station reverberates to the unique sound of two 'Deltics' as D9012 and another plus Brush Type 2 D5824 all rest at the buffers. It can be confirmed that both machines carry their names as the BR crest is carried on the cabside, this change being necessary when the nameplates were fitted. D9012 was another Finsbury Park machine and a bit of a rarity as it carried its *Crepello* name from new in September 1961. All of the Finsbury Park locos were named after racehorses. It completed less than 20 years in traffic, being condemned in May 1981. COLOUR-RAIL.COM

A very different view at Peterborough is seen as D9002 passes North Box on July 25th, 1963. It seems that old traditions die hard as it is not immaculate in its turnout, which was frequently a way to identify A4s allocated to Gateshead shed, which was also the home of this engine. April 1963 was the month of naming, this taking place at York when the plates carrying *The Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry* were unveiled at the station. COLOUR-RAIL.COM

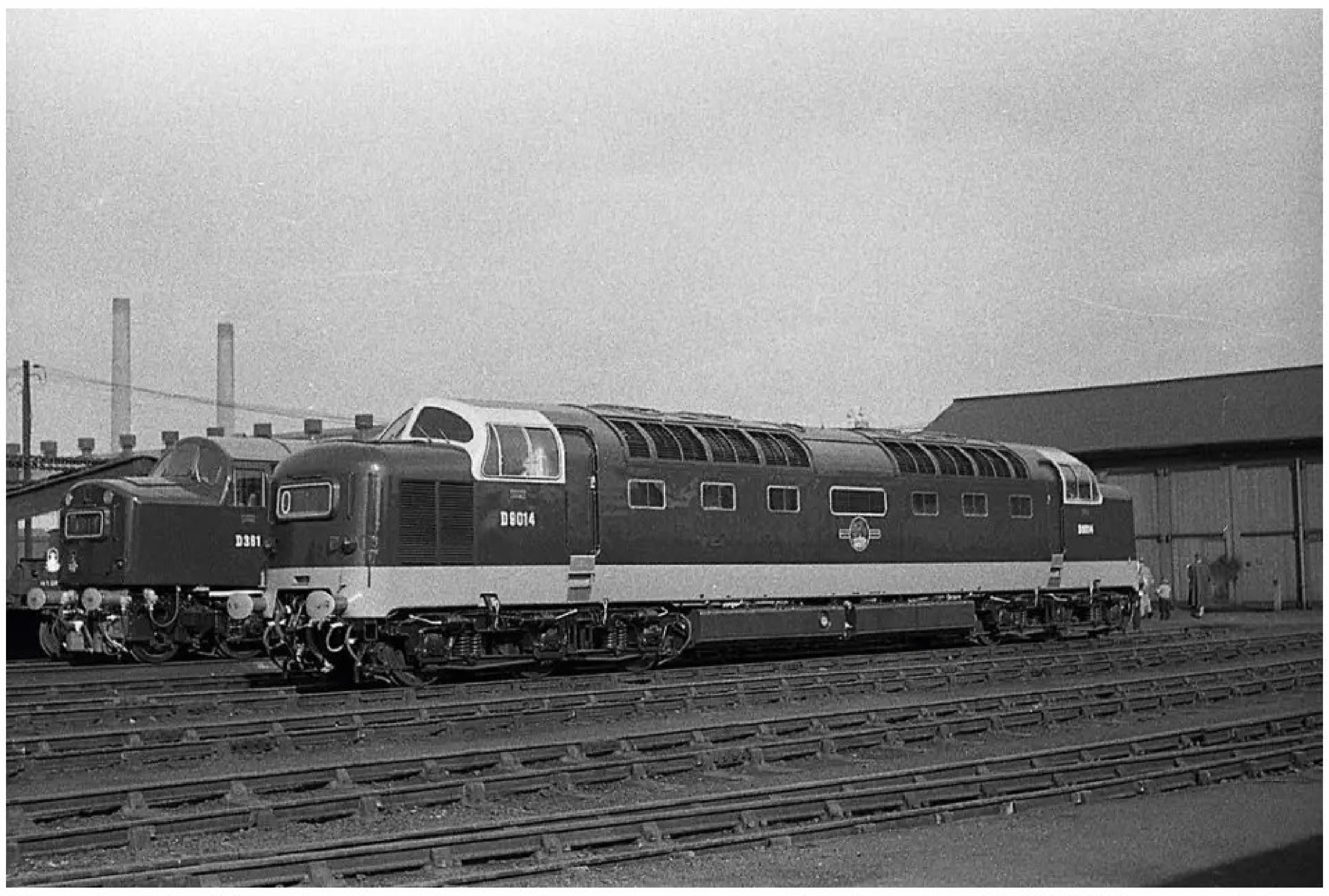




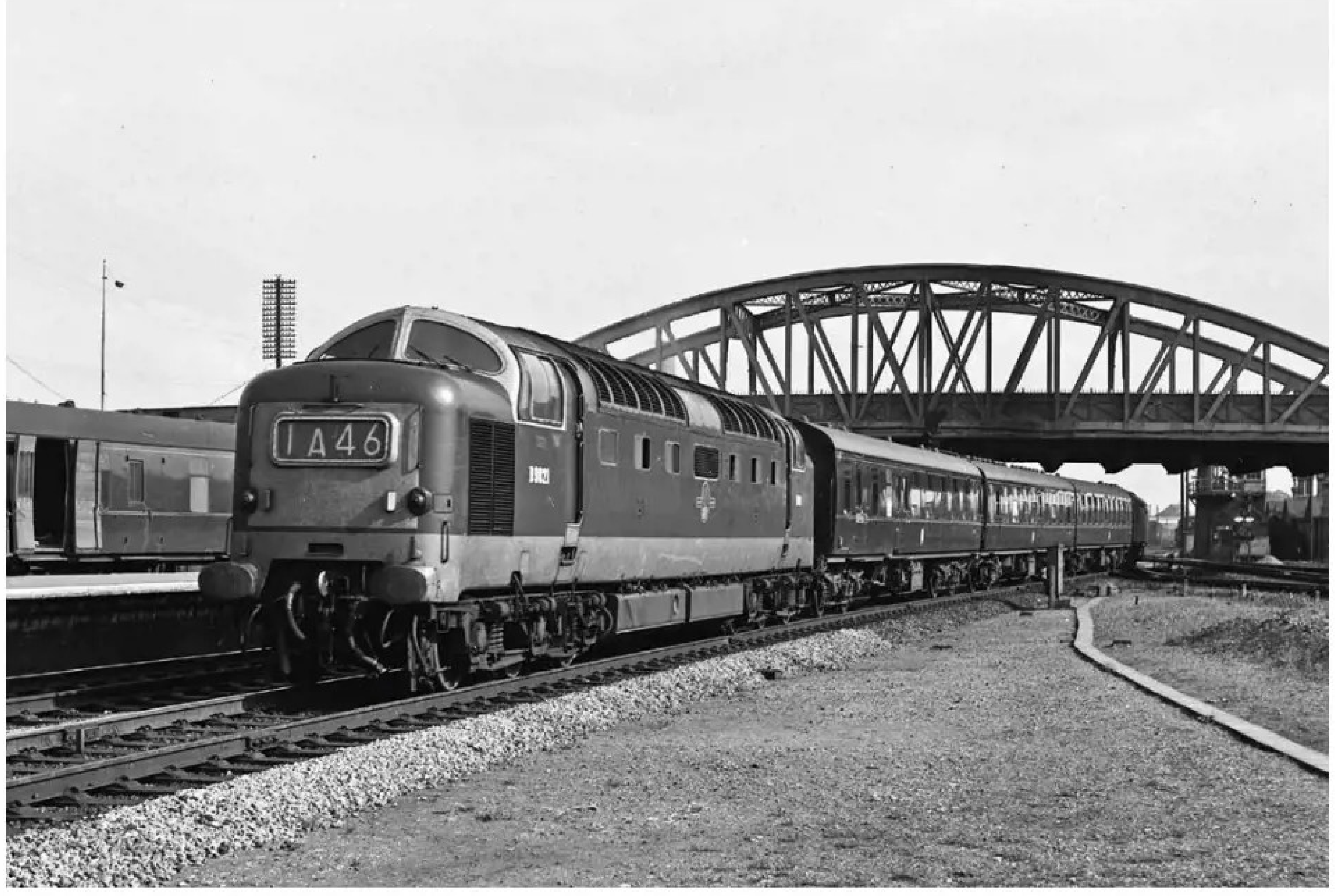
The class gravitated to blue livery with full yellow ends, losing their white window surrounds in the process. The BR arrow was on the cabside with numbers behind both cab doors. 9003 does not have the 'D' prefix when seen at York. Nameplates that originally had a black background changed to red. Given the size of the *Meld* nameplate, it benefitted from the red to help it stand out on the bodyside. Having a racehorse name confirmed its allocation as Finsbury Park, where it resided for all except seven months of its 19 years and nine months' service life. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



D9000 presents a classic East Coast Main Line scene as it passes Walton, near Peterborough, with the London-bound 'Flying Scotsman' on 20th July, 1961. The loco had entered service on February 28th of that year and was one of the fleet based at Haymarket. The initial livery possibly suited the class the best, with a standard green body but with a deep light green band at the bottom with white window surrounds. Nearly all were delivered un-named and this allowed the central display of a large BR logo. D9000 was named *Royal Scots Grey* at Edinburgh Waverley station on June 18th, 1962. D OVENDEN/COLOUR-RAIL.COM



'Fresh out of the box' as the saying goes, a newly delivered D9014 is posed in the works yard at Doncaster along with an equally fresh D381. The 'Deltic' was destined for Haymarket shed with a nominal date for entering service of 29th September 1961. It would later acquire one of the longest names, becoming *The Duke of Wellington's Regiment* in October 1963. D9019 was the last of the class to be named, having to wait until September 1965. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



Another classic East Coast location, readily identified by the bridge, was Peterborough, where an un-named D9021 is in charge of 'The Talisman' on July 25th, 1963. It did not take long for the class to gain their yellow panels, but nameplates were a different matter. This was in part due to both the Scottish and North Eastern examples carrying regimental names, with a desire to have official naming ceremonies. It was D9021's turn on November 29th, 1963, when it received *Argyll and Sutherland Highlander* plates at Stirling. COLOUR-RAIL.COM

HALF PRICE TO THE FAR NORTH 1982

By Andy Sparks

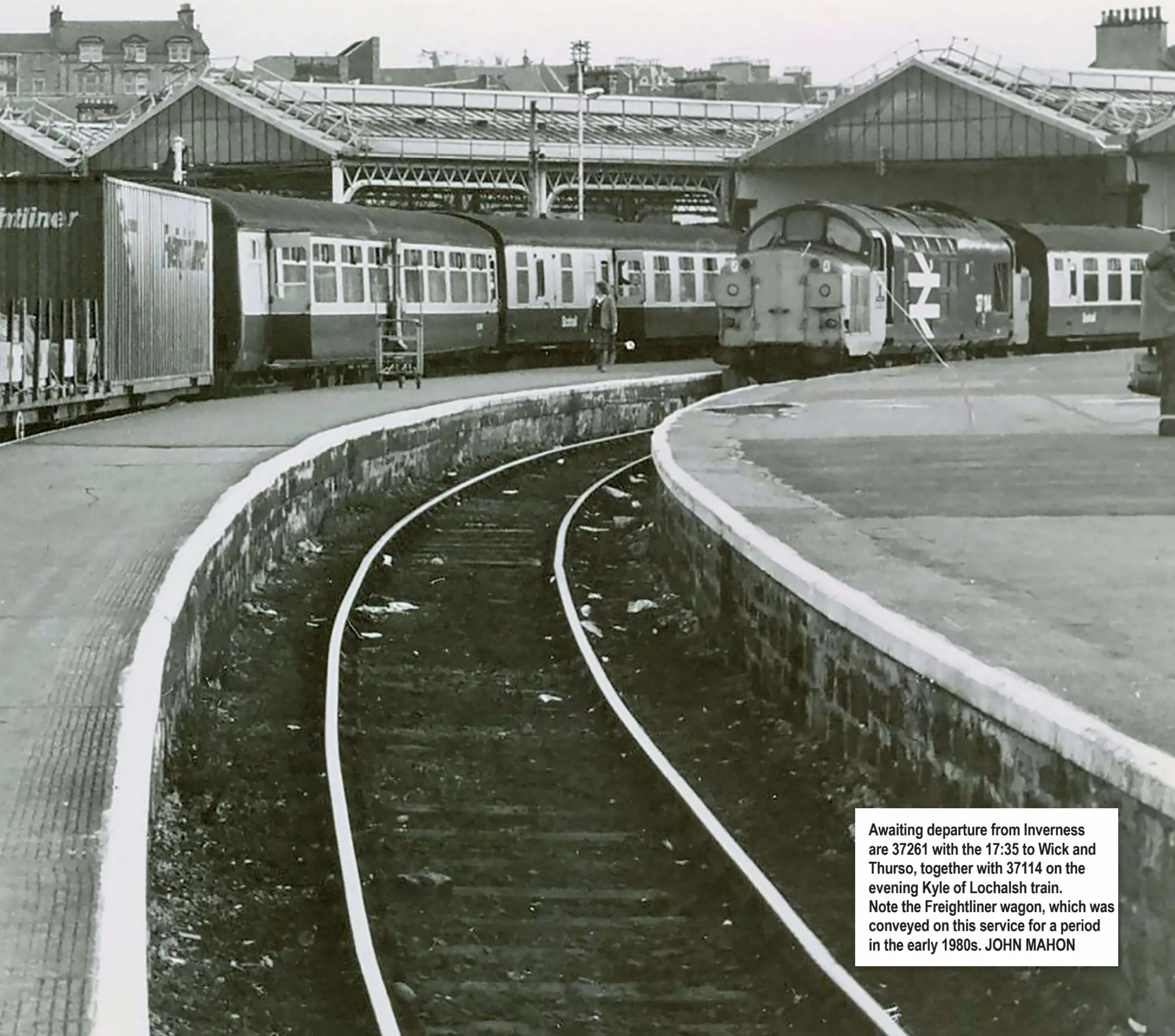
Freig
53N80

Around 1980, British Rail introduced the £10 Young Persons Railcard, which allowed half-price travel to anyone under the age of 24 years. This immediately doubled the distance I could travel on my meagre wage as a junior manager at a heavy engineering company. By 1982, I had become a master at combining the Railcard's fantastic 50% off virtually everything with other British Rail money-saving offers. This particular expedition was a prime example, which involved a special budget return from Manchester Victoria to Edinburgh (via Carstairs) and a one-week Scottish Railrover ticket, which made it ridiculously cheap. I had given myself a choice: my August 'Wakes Week' holiday could either be a hardcore track-bashing affair involving thousands of miles of travel or a more leisurely foray to as far north as the Railrover would take me. I plumped for the latter; was I showing signs of ageing at 23 years and 11 months old? Perhaps British Rail was right with their under-24 interpretation of the term 'young person'?

Inverness was, of course, the first staging point on my long trek north, but I was not going to travel direct from Edinburgh. On my journey up from Manchester, I had been poring over timetables and decided to sample the relatively new ScotRail Edinburgh to Glasgow shuttle – Mark 3s and a Mark 2 DBSO powered by a recently out-shopped Class 47/7 working in push-pull mode. I had previously sampled the old order – a top and tailed Class 27/1 thrash aboard their accompanying well-worn Mark 2bs – and wanted to compare the difference. I had also chosen to make use of the Inter City sleeper to Inverness, a great way to travel and cheaper than a hotel.

In true enthusiast fashion, while at Edinburgh Travel Centre (I obtained the Railrover from there), I booked a berth on the evening sleeper from Glasgow Queen Street, which must have seemed odd to the lady behind the counter because a portion of the Inverness sleeper also ran from Edinburgh. Few 'normal' people would make the journey from Edinburgh to Glasgow when there was no apparent need. Readers will no doubt understand and agree with my thoughts at the time – why miss out on a new rail travel experience (push-pull, 47/7 powered), especially when my newly acquired Railrover allowed me to sample it as many times as I wanted.

The modern ensemble must have been just what the doctor ordered for the people of Forth and Clyde areas; it was clean, frequent, quick and reliable. For me, though, the experience paled in comparison to what had gone before - a frenzied dash sandwiched between clag erupting Sulzers seemingly being run at full bore throughout the journey. Unforgettable, but surely not how the Class 27s were designed to be used?



Awaiting departure from Inverness are 37261 with the 17:35 to Wick and Thurso, together with 37114 on the evening Kyle of Lochalsh train. Note the Freightliner wagon, which was conveyed on this service for a period in the early 1980s. JOHN MAHON

47708 is seen passing through Princes Street Gardens as it arrives at Edinburgh Waverley with a push-pull service from Glasgow Queen Street on April 17th, 1981. R. BRISCALL

My eagerness to try out the new train had made my arrival in Glasgow a few hours too early for the sleeper north - what should I do with my time? I gave myself three choices; take a bus to Eastfield (ED) to photograph Scottish Type 2s on shed, a trip on the 'Clockwork Orange' underground, or a walk across the city to Central station. The walk appealed most because I could get something to eat and drink along the way, plus there was the guarantee of a few interesting 'shots' at one of Scotland's busiest railway stations. This option was taken, producing the lasting memory of a fry-up accompanied by a warm cup of tea in a main street Wimpy Bar, plus plenty of Class 126 and Class 303/311 action (not too interesting at the time, but great for generating a bit of nostalgia now).

A few more pictures 'in the bag' and suitably (or was it unsuitably?) fortified, I managed to find my way back to Queen Street station in plenty of time for my train. It was 10pm, and there was still some daylight left for hand-held photography (it gets darker later in Scotland in the summer) and the sleeper stock was already in. The train was made up of a mixture of SO Mark 1s, BGs for parcels/mail and a Mark I sleeping car, which was eking out its final year on this service.

The ensemble was headed up by 27022, which, even though there was one and half hours to the departure time, had been left to burble away in typical heritage traction fashion. Although the 'berth ready' time was twenty to eleven, the very courteous attendant let me take up residence a little earlier. I must have looked as weary as I felt after my long but enjoyable day. He made me feel like a V.I.P. helping me aboard, asking me what time I would like to be awoken and would I prefer tea or coffee with my biscuits in the morning? He also advised me that I would have the twin berth to myself throughout the journey as the train was lightly loaded that night.

Unlike my previous sleeper journeys, when the excitement and the Commonwealth bogies deprived me of deep sleep, this time, I fell sound asleep shortly after my head hit the pillow. I missed the normally spirited departure from Queen Street, the passing of Eastfield depot and the convoluted entrance into Inverness. The attachment of the Edinburgh portion, loco movements and attendant changeover at Perth only semi-consciously registered. The attendant's well-practised dignified knock on the berth door at 5.30am brought a very welcome pot of tea and a cellophane-wrapped pack of Crawford's Rich Tea biscuits, and I was quickly back to full consciousness. From then on, everytime I see a rich tea biscuit, I always think of Mark 1 sleepers. I wonder how many other enthusiasts associate everyday things with their railway experiences of the past? After a quick wash using the berth's corner sink and the complimentary block of Palmolive soap (one of my other immediate associations with railways), I made my way, slightly bleary eyed, to the platform end to see what railway action I could see and photograph.

Inverness northwards

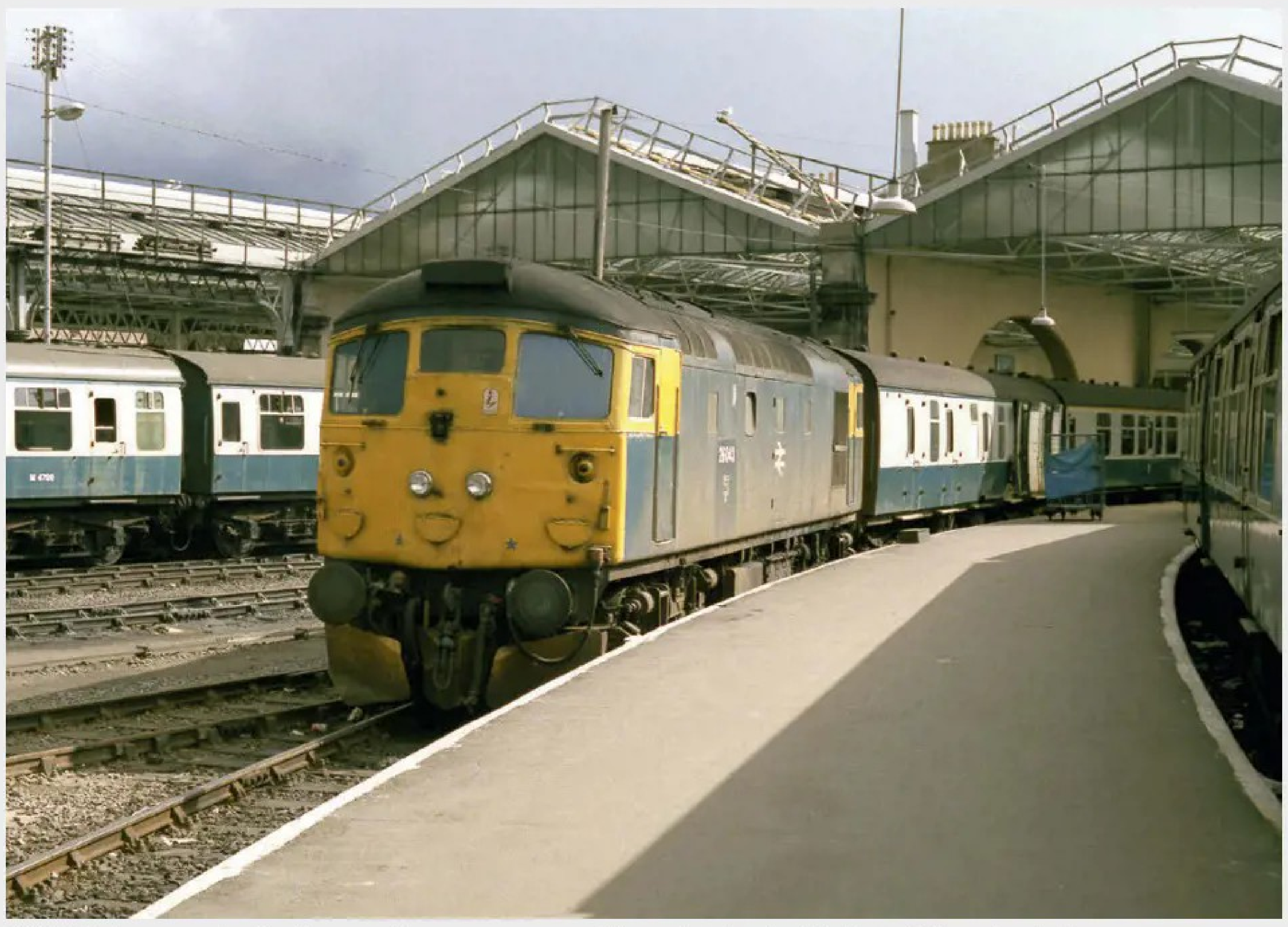
Things start to happen early at Inverness station (hence my 5:30am start), with trains for Aberdeen, Thurso/Wick and Kyle of Lochalsh due to depart before 7am. I stood enthralled at the proceedings, which featured the reversing of stock into the former Highland Railway station due to its slightly unusual track and platform layout. Class 26s and 37s in charge of blue and grey-liveried Mark 1s dominated the scene; unlike today, there was not one DMU in sight. Once these trains and the empty stock of my sleeper had cleared the station, there would be space for the next wave of activity, which included the arrival of 'The Royal Highlander' sleeper from London Euston. Unfortunately, I would not see this stage of the day's proceedings as I was going to the Far North (eventually).

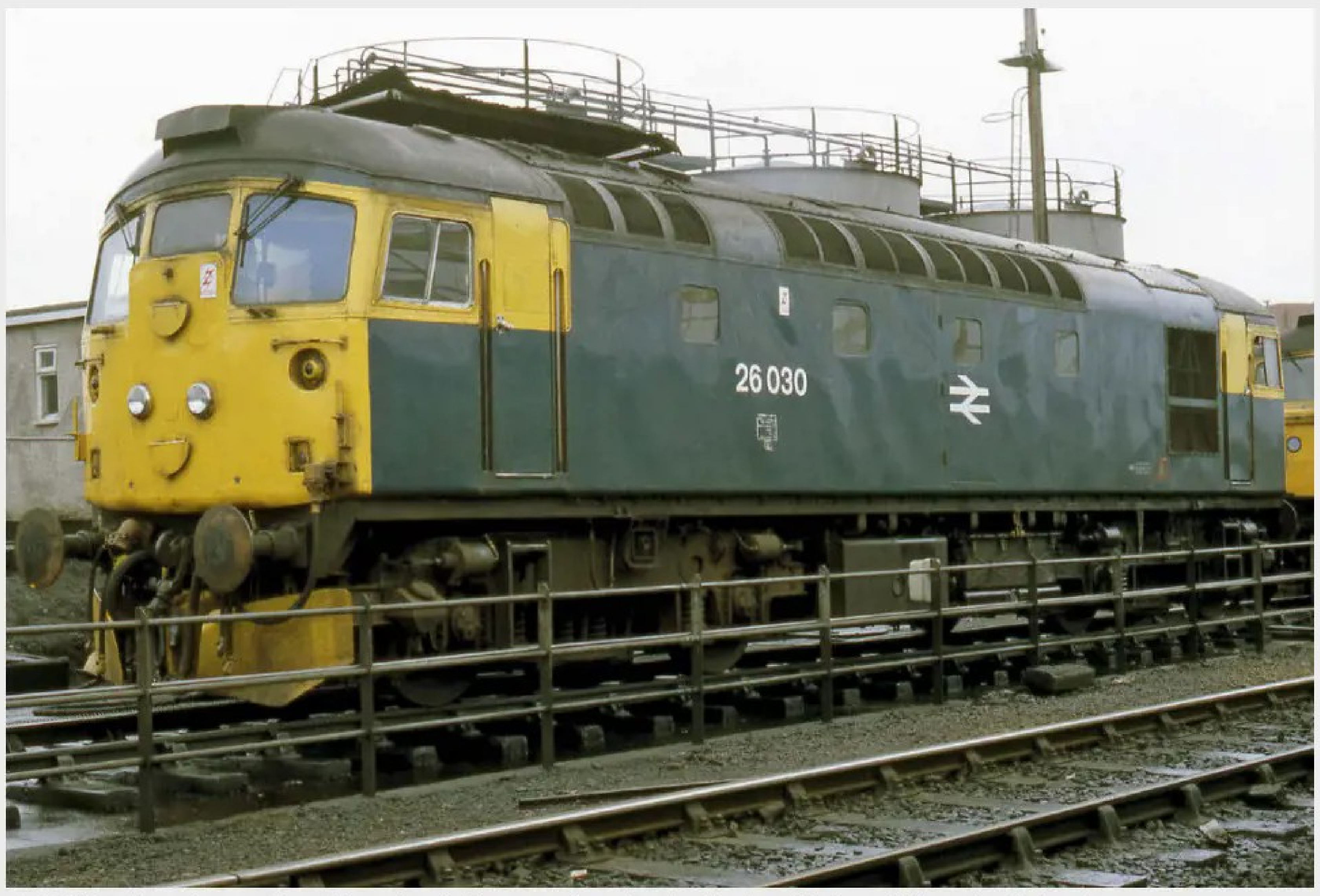
Before I took the route of 'The Orcadian', I had to try my hand at photography on the Road to the Isles – the line to Kyle of Lochalsh. I had read so many good things about it, I couldn't miss out on the opportunity. It also helped to ensure I got my money's worth from the Railrover. 26030 of Inverness depot and its four coaches were waiting to take me on my detour to the west coast port. But before climbing aboard, I had to raid the station buffet for supplies – sausage rolls, crisps, chocolate bar and another cup of tea (a modern dietician's nightmare!). The timetable did not mention the provision of refreshments on the train, so I could not take any chances.

The journey lived up to my expectations; the curves and gradients tested the Class 26 to the full, along with its driver's skill. The scenery was equally impressive and at first, I tried to take it all in from the open droplight of the leading carriage. I soon gave that up as a bad job; the close proximity of rock escarpment, trees, telegraph poles, bridges and tunnels made me question my sanity - I value my head too much!

After that, the only time I stood up during the rest of the journey was to watch the early morning Class 26-hauled Kyle of Lochalsh to Inverness pass at Achnasheen. Upon arrival at Kyle of Lochalsh, a sign pointing to the Skye Ferry was too much of a temptation for me, even though the itinerary I had set myself meant that I was going to return to Inverness on the same train I had arrived on at this remote extremity of the BR Network. The train's one and half hour turnaround time allowed me enough time to sample the short ferry crossing (now superseded by a the Skye Bridge), which took me to Kyleakin, where I almost succumbed to further temptation – a bus ride to the Celtic distractions of Portree.

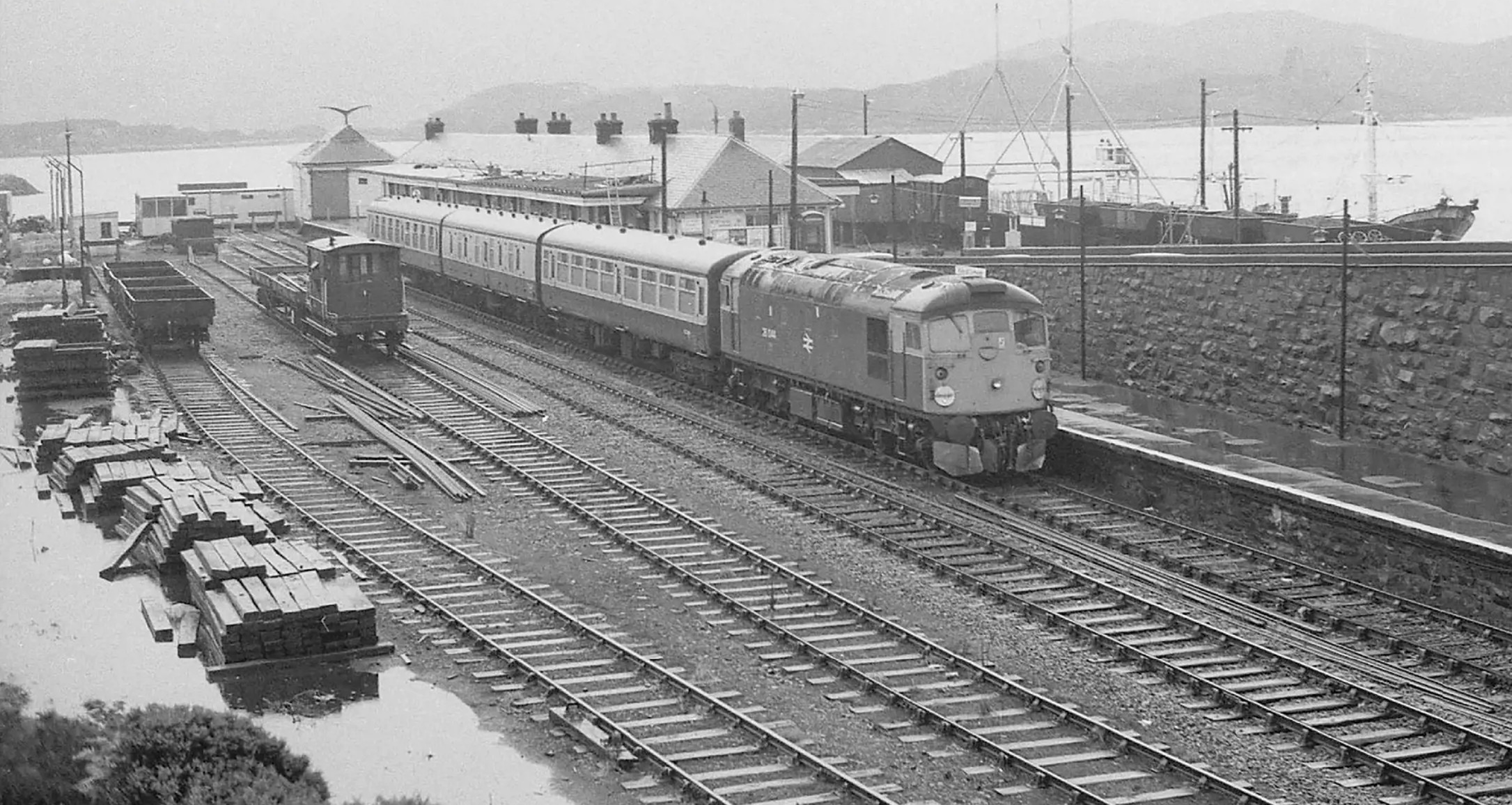
I chose to remain true to the cause of railway enthusiasm and returned to Kyle of Lochalsh station in plenty of time to photograph 26030 and its surroundings, which reminded me of something out of a 1970s model railway magazine – almost too perfectly laid out to be real. Back on board, I settled down for the return journey and fell asleep – was it the air, or was I getting old? I woke up just before Dingwall, where, of course, I could have changed for the Far North line, but there is not a great deal on offer at Dingwall for someone who likes photographing trains, especially if it was several hours to the next one. 26030 got me back to Inverness on time; not that I was in any hurry as it was almost four hours to my next train. This allowed me time to explore the city, photograph more station activity and visit the depot, which had several examples of its allocation of Class 08s, 26s, and 37s on shed.


26043 is ready to leave Inverness with a train to Kyle of Lochalsh on May 28th, 1980. DAVE HIGSON



26030, the loco that hauled the author's train to Kyle of Lochalsh, is seen stabled at Inverness on March 27th, 1982. DAVE HIGSON

26044 stands at a very wet and bleak Kyle of Lochalsh with the stock for a train to Inverness on October 6th, 1983. JOSEPH PORTER



Carbisdale Castle

My train was due to arrive at Thurso just before 10pm, which I thought was a bit late to be finding somewhere to eat and sleep. I was a member of the Y.H.A and decided to consult my handbook to see if there was anywhere interesting I could stop off at en route. Sure enough, close to Culrain station, there is Carbisdale Castle; now the name alone would make anyone curious. A payphone call was made, and they had room for me in one of their dormitories, so I immediately booked myself in for the night.

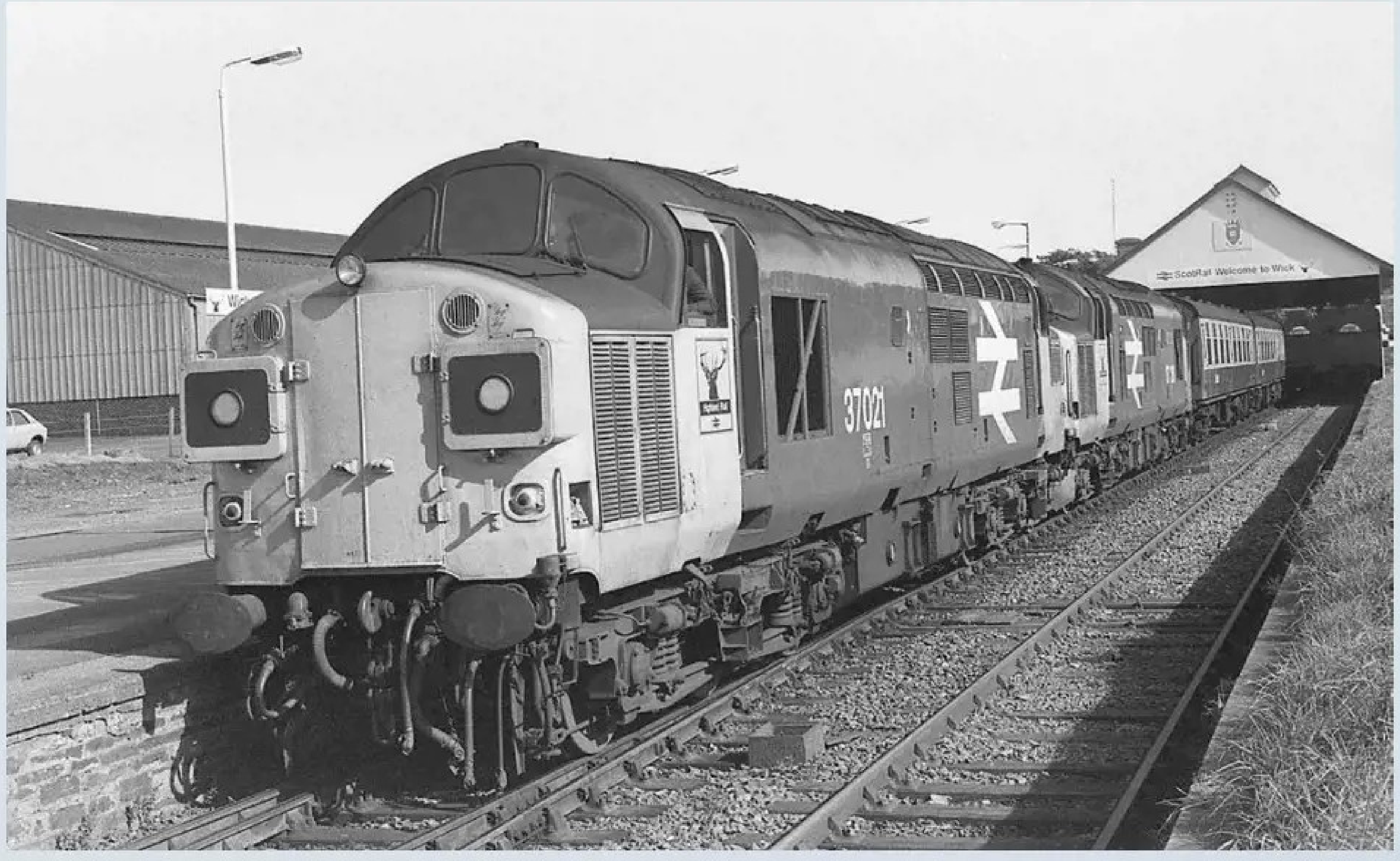
For me, as an engineer, the best part of the journey to Culrain was the semi-industrial area around Invergordon. Along the banks of the Cromarty Firth, the oil boom was clearly in evidence, with oil rigs being fitted out, pipes prepared and supply ships being loaded. Unsurprisingly, this hive of industry's small yard, plus the spur to the Alcan smelter, were far from redundant, adding to my interest.

By the time I arrived at Culrain, it was raining (not unusual) and I was the only person to get off. Before heading off up to the Castle, I lingered a while at the lonely station. I watched the Class 37 bring on the power as it got its train underway and waited until the tail lamp disappeared into the distance. As I left the station, I could hear the '37' pulling out of Invershin station half a mile away on the other side of the Kyle of Sutherland. Even when I got to the Gothic-style entrance of the Castle, I could hear the train making its way north towards Lairg.

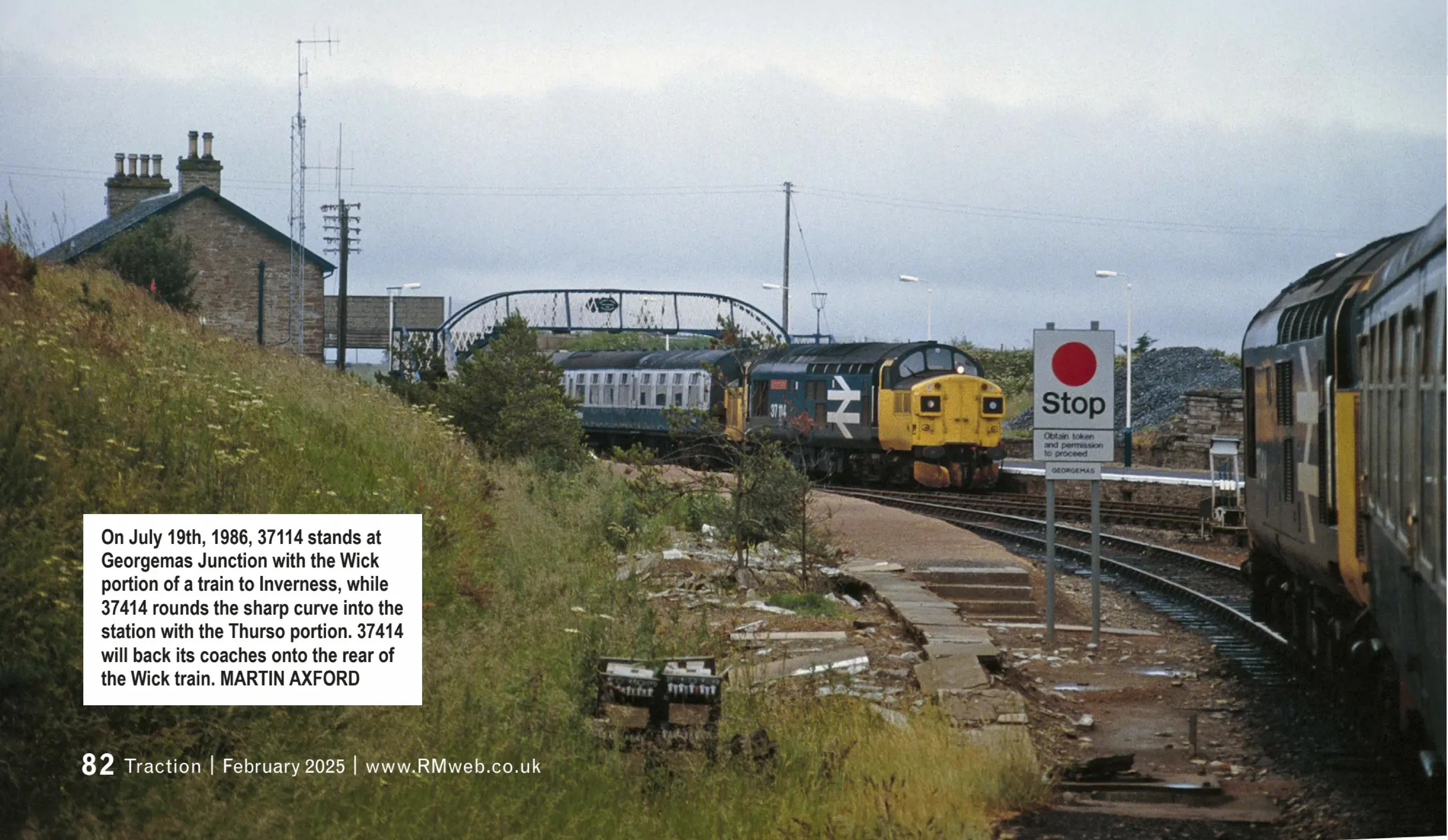
Carbisdale Castle was everything I could have expected and more. Shortly after arrival there, any thoughts of trains quickly left my mind, the sight of naked ladies had me transfixed. What more could a youngish chap ask for? Answer... real live ones. Unfortunately for me, they were cold, lifeless statues and paintings. The former stately home was filled with fine antiques and furnishings; it must surely be one of the most sumptuous hostels in the world - all of this while a superb restaurant was just a short walk away at the Invershin House Hotel. I had my first decent meal for days. I had salmon; in those times before large-scale fish farming had become established, it was quite a delicacy for a Mancunian such as I. Of all the hostels I have ever stayed at, this is the only one that has scored as highly as 11 out of 10!

At just turned 8am, I was once again back on a rain-soaked Culrain station; this time the station was busier and there were about six people joining the train, all youth hostellers. The snowplough-fitted Class 37-hauled Inverness to Thurso and Wick early morning service arrived on time and after a very brief stop, we were underway. As this train had buffet car facilities only as far as Ardgay, I was unable to partake in its culinary delights for breakfast, which resulted in my being forced to venture into unchartered waters - oat biscuits purchased the previous night from the hostel shop (they were surprisingly good). The reason the buffet closed so early in the train's journey north was because the attendant had to transfer to the southbound train at Lairg.

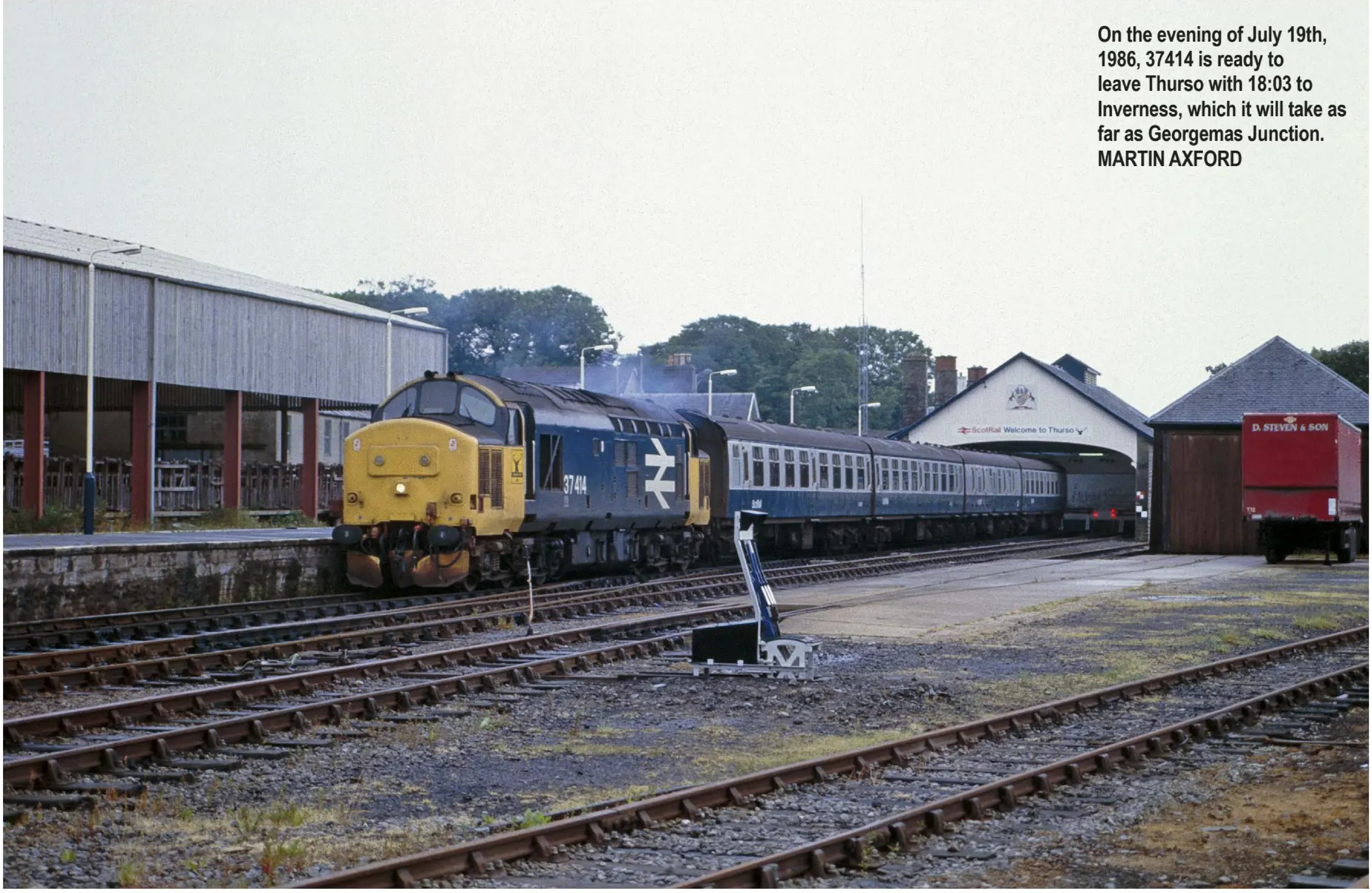
The passing of the north and southbound trains at Lairg meant that I did not have long to wait to get busy with my Pentax camera, and despite the damp, overcast conditions, I managed to secure a few decent Class 37 shots for posterity. After Lairg, my train had the line north to itself, I put my camera away, spending the two-hour journey to Georgemas Junction spellbound by the view from the carriage window. The combination of castles, coastline, mountains, sylvan glens and wild moorland was quite something. North of Helmsdale, where the land is particularly desolate, the largely unfenced railway line intrudes in a world that belongs to some of nature's finest animals and birds. My memory of the sight of a stag with a vast, lonely, almost haunting horizon behind him, watching the passing of the train, will remain with me for a long time. I wonder what he made of the Class 37 and its half dozen or so Mark 1s toiling towards County March Summit?



37021 and 37260 are ready to leave Wick with a train for Inverness on September 8th, 1985. JOSEPH PORTER



On July 19th, 1986, 37114 stands at Georgemas Junction with the Wick portion of a train to Inverness, while 37414 rounds the sharp curve into the station with the Thurso portion. 37414 will back its coaches onto the rear of the Wick train. MARTIN AXFORD



On the evening of July 19th, 1986, 37414 is ready to leave Thurso with 18:03 to Inverness, which it will take as far as Georgemas Junction. MARTIN AXFORD

Upon arrival at Georgemas Junction, the sun was shining, prompting a walk on the platform to watch the train being split – half to Wick, half to Thurso. 37260 was waiting in the yard to back onto my portion of the train; a slick, well-practised operation, which took just a few minutes. This loco's new found operating environment was a far cry from London's Stratford where it had been allocated during the 1970s – a perfect example of the true extent of 1980s' motive power cascading. The English Electric stalwart, of course, made easy work of getting its short train the final few miles to journey's end at Thurso.

Like Kyle of Lochalsh, the station and yard were almost too perfect, everything was well maintained and manicured, there was no sign of the neglect that had become synonymous with British Rail at the time. One thing that a railway modeller would probably have left out of their home-based re-creation would have been the former GWR full brake coach, which was parked alongside the train shed. This coach was in very good order and clearly well looked after in its departmental role – another example of extreme cascading. I sometimes wonder if it survived into preservation. The amount of passengers streaming out of the station to the Highland Omnibuses bus stop made me curious as to the reason. They were all heading for the P. & O. Orkney ferry terminal at Scrabster. Once again, I could not resist the temptation of a boat ride across to Orkney (quite a bit longer this time).

Despite my full-price ferry payment aberration, my evening at Stromness Youth Hostel was worth it. By the time I returned to Thurso station, it was Thursday, I had almost four more days of life left in my Railrover. My next destination was Mallaig via Inverness, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Fort William. But that, as they say, is another story and set of photographs. There's a problem though, I can't find the photographs so the editor will have to make a choice!

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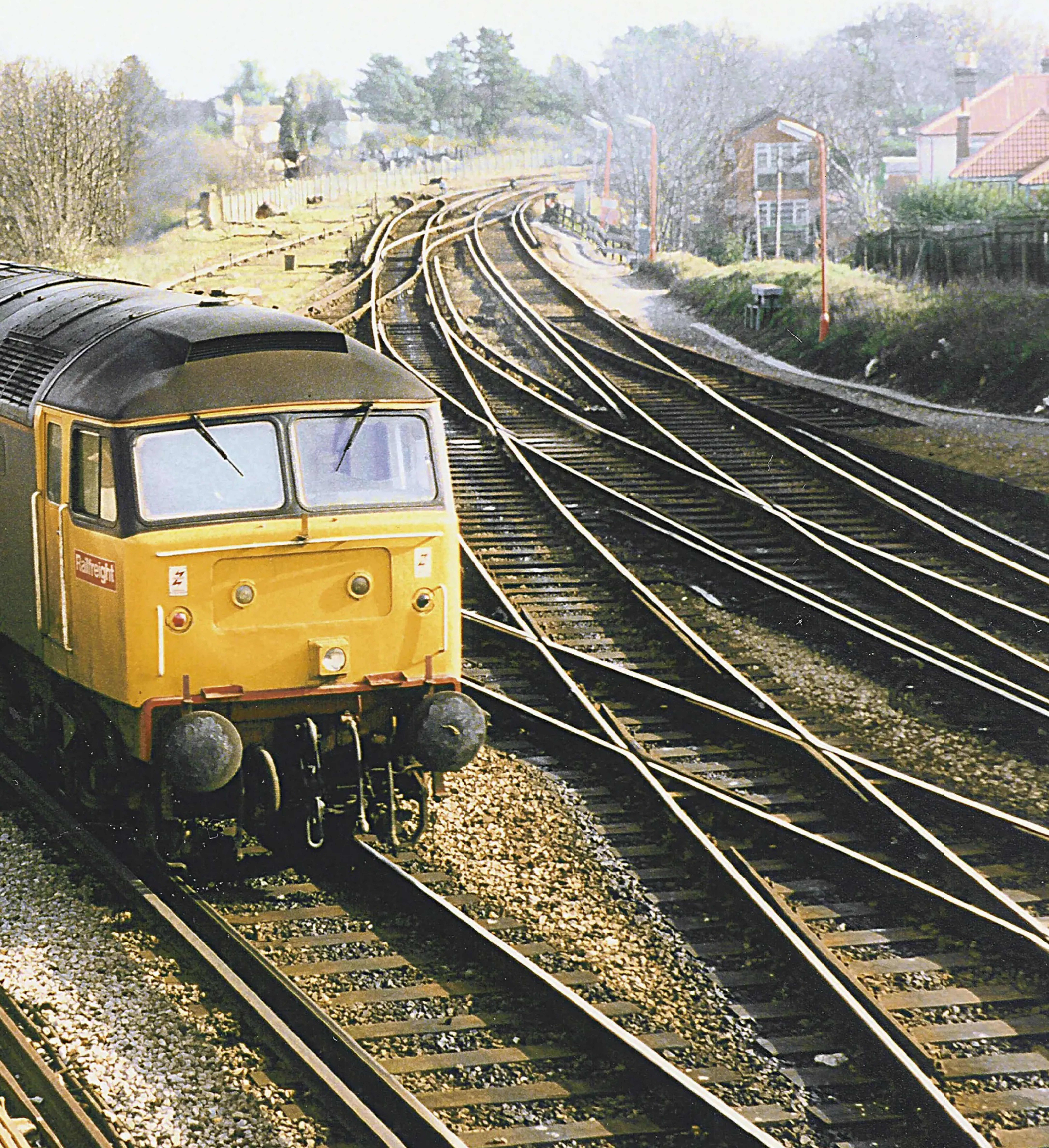
CLASS 33S AND 4-TCS TO WEYMOUTH

By Mark Pike

The Southern Region's solution to the problem of powering services between Bournemouth and Weymouth after the third rail electrification of the main line from Waterloo to Bournemouth was to use Class 33s to power the four or eight-car sets made up from the 4-TC unpowered units. Trains arriving from Waterloo at Bournemouth would have a Class 33 attached to the front coaches and would then head for Weymouth with the loco leading. In the opposite direction, the locomotive would propel the coaches onto the Bournemouth portion of the train with its powered 4-REP unit.



This incredible working was brought about by the failure of 33112 in 1988! The train got into problems at Poole and the only locomotive in the area to assist was 47215. However, this operation was not as easy as it looks! The train obviously required a driver up front in the 4-TC, but it also needed another driver to be in the Class 47 along with an assistant to give him instructions. The Class 47 wasn't fitted with any form of push-pull apparatus, so in effect, it was a long shunt move from Poole to Bournemouth! In eight years, this was the only time I saw such a strange working. The ensemble is seen cautiously departing from Branksome station. The line to the right goes to Bournemouth EMU depot.

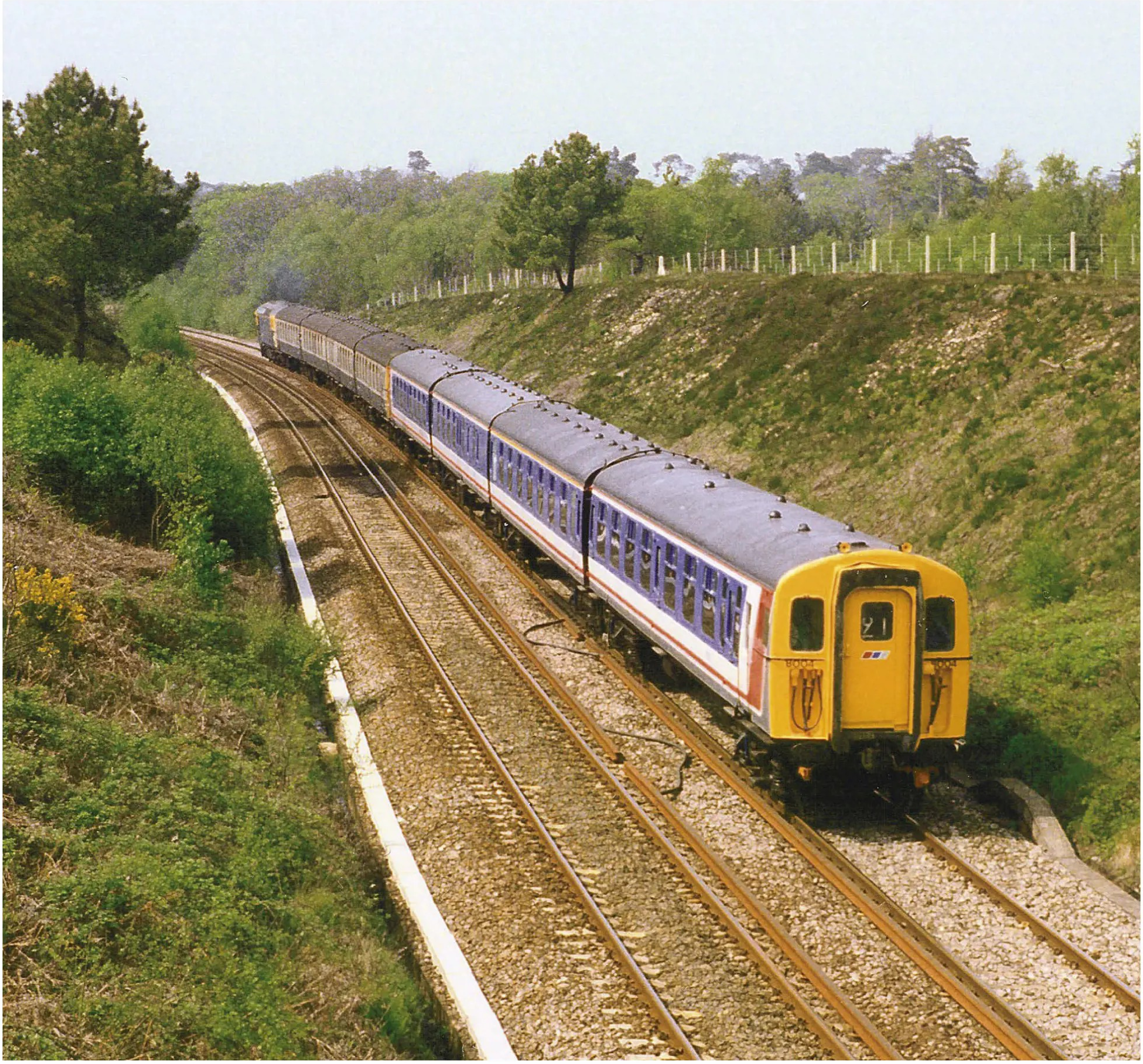
Seen from the now famous southern approach to Bincombe Tunnel shortly after leaving Upwey, 33106 is pushing hard at the rear of two 4-TC units forming a Weymouth to Waterloo service in October 1987. Eight coaches were actually quite a hefty load for a Class 33.

In this October 1987 view, we see the southern entrance of Bincombe Tunnel. After the climb from Dorchester, 33111, with units 8028 and 8018, is beginning the descent down the long bank down towards Upwey and Weymouth.

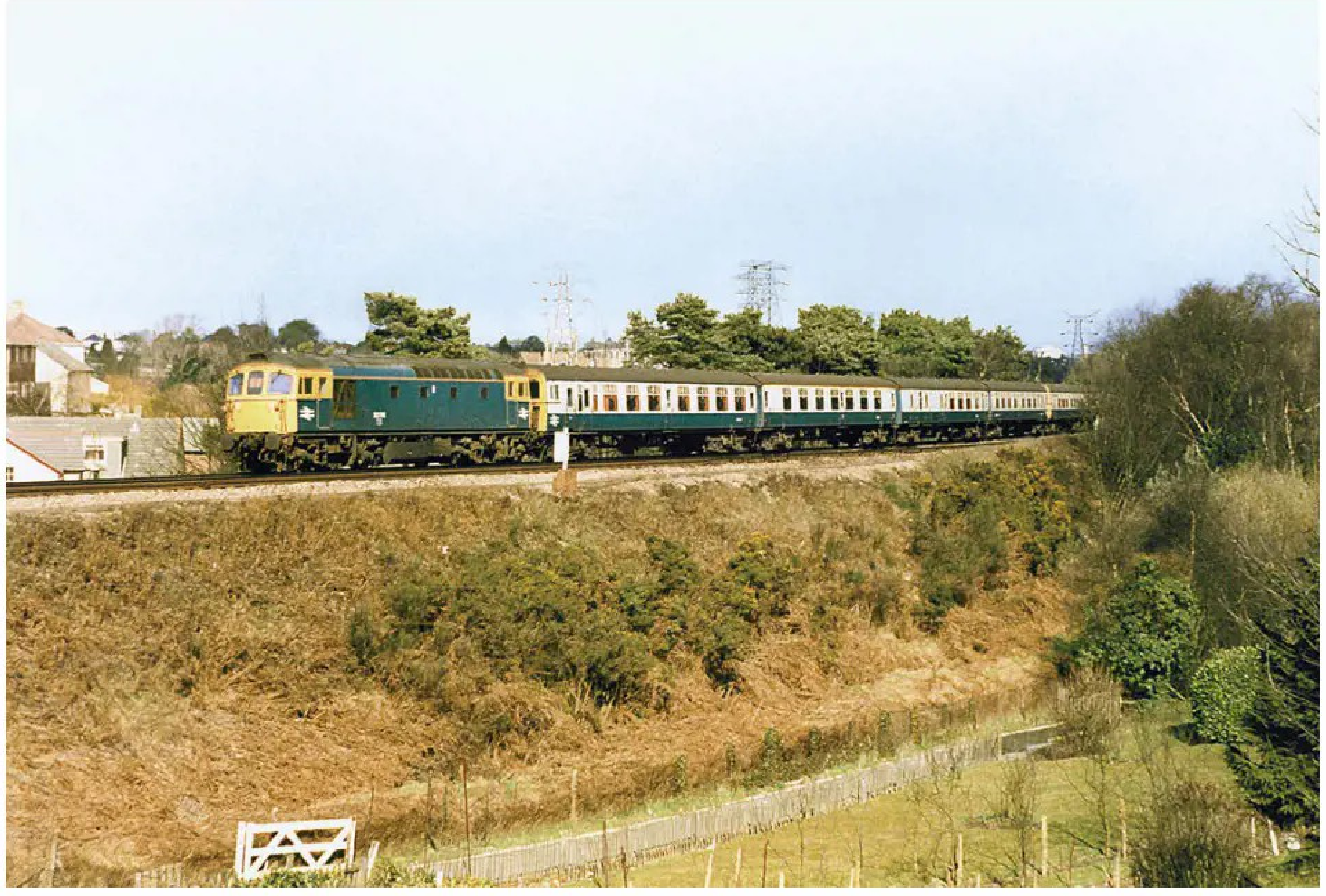
This Weymouth-bound train is seen dropping down from the short tunnel just south of the main tunnel at Bincombe in October 1987. 33101 is leading units 8004 and 8016. This smaller tunnel carries the main Dorchester to Weymouth main road that can be a solid queue of traffic during the height of summer.

33106 and unit 8021 are seen leaving Moreton (Dorset) in May 1988 bound for Waterloo. Like most level crossings along the route, this one used to be controlled by a signal box that was situated just to the left of the locomotive. It closed in 1970.

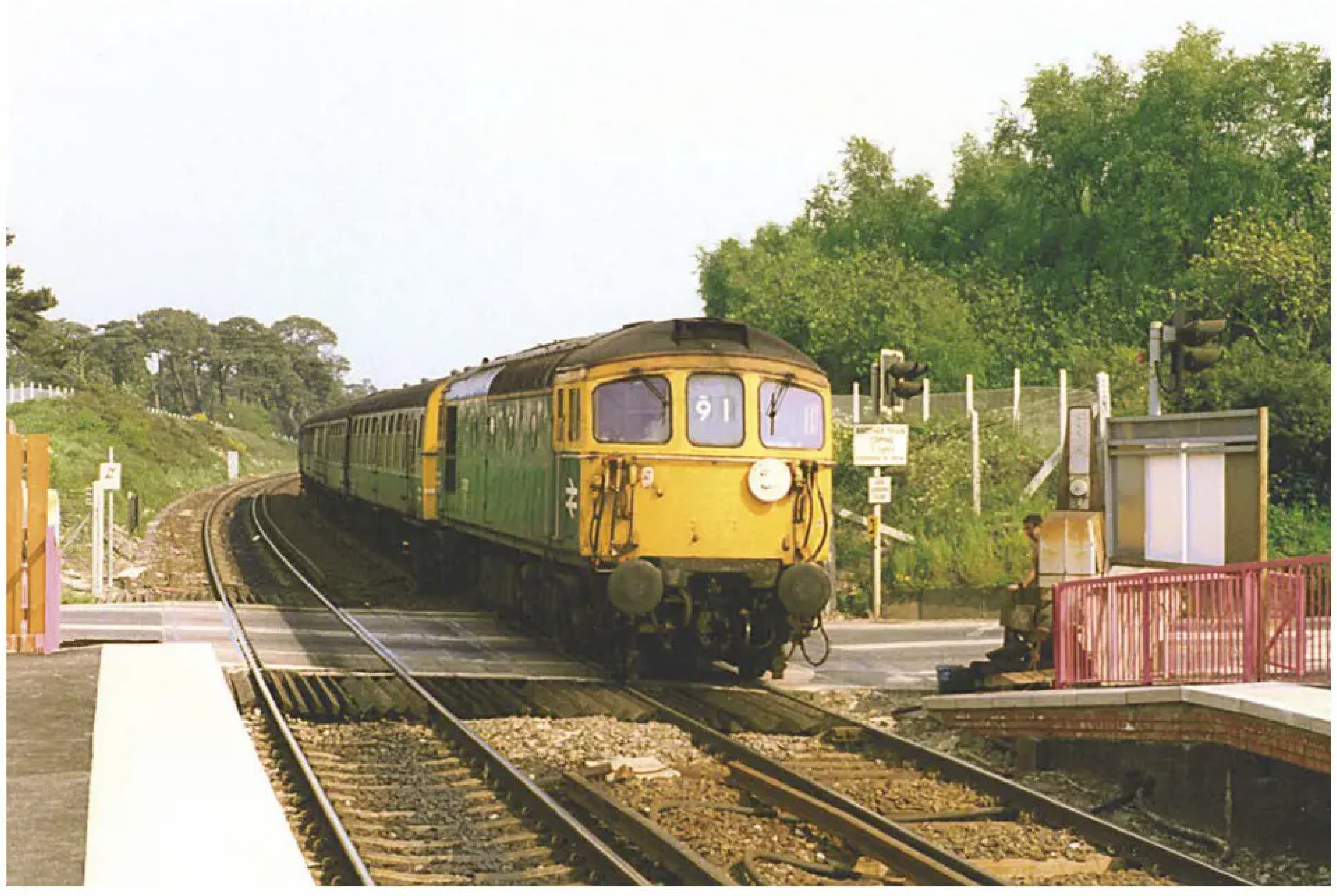
In October 1987, units 8022 and 8030 with 33111 on the rear are seen leaving the northern end of Bincombe Tunnel. A small signal box once stood in the recess, seen just in front of the leading 4-TC. As the summit of the incline is right at this spot, the box was provided primarily to control the movements of the numerous banking engines that used to drop off the rear of heavy expresses here during steam days. It was also very remote, the only access being across a ploughed field! There also used to be a short siding in the middle of the tracks at this point but by this time they have been slewed together.



Despite Network Southeast coming into being during 1986, the 4-TC units were already doomed and were not seen as a priority to repaint into the new house colours. However, there is always one that breaks the rules! Unit No. 8004 was the only 4-TC unit painted in the 'toothpaste' livery and only appeared right towards the end of its working days. It is seen here shortly after departure from Moreton (Dorset) in May 1988 with a Waterloo train being pushed in the rear by 33114.



Not only has the motive power and stock gone in this photograph, so to has the entire view! The embankment along which the train is running is now totally covered in trees and bushes, completely obscuring this scene. In 1987, 33113 has just departed Branksome station propelling its eight-coach train towards Bournemouth and eventually London.



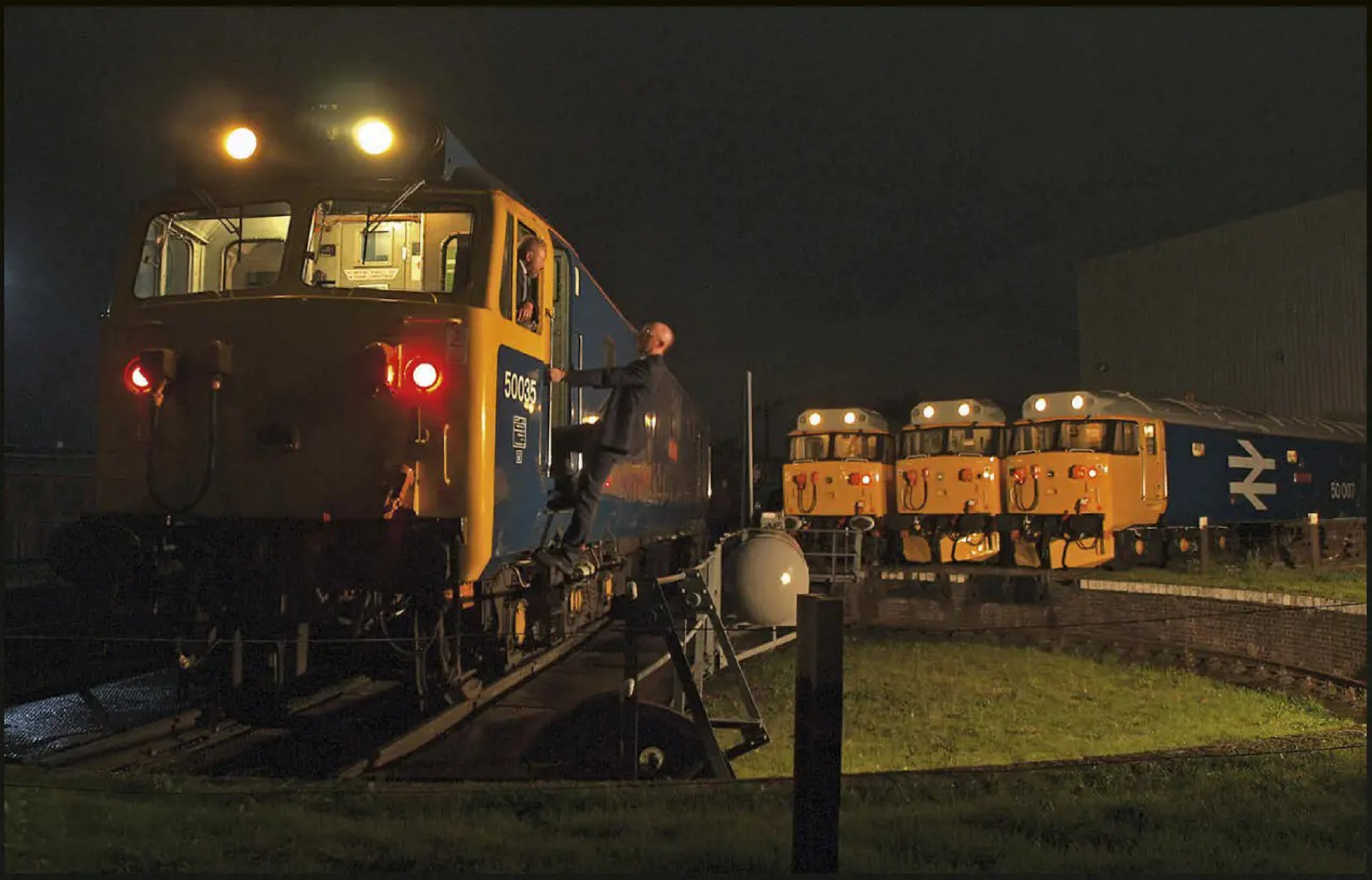
In May 1988, 33101 and unit 8020 are seen arriving at Moreton (Dorset) with a Weymouth-bound train on the last weekend of the push-pulls before full electrification commenced with the new Class 442 'Wessex Electric' units. The locomotive carries a small headboard to mark the end of 21 years of push-pull operation between Bournemouth and Weymouth.

BACK IN TIME AT THE SEVERN VALLEY RAILWAY

Jarrod Cotter recently visited the Severn Valley Railway where time was turned back under the lights at Kidderminster

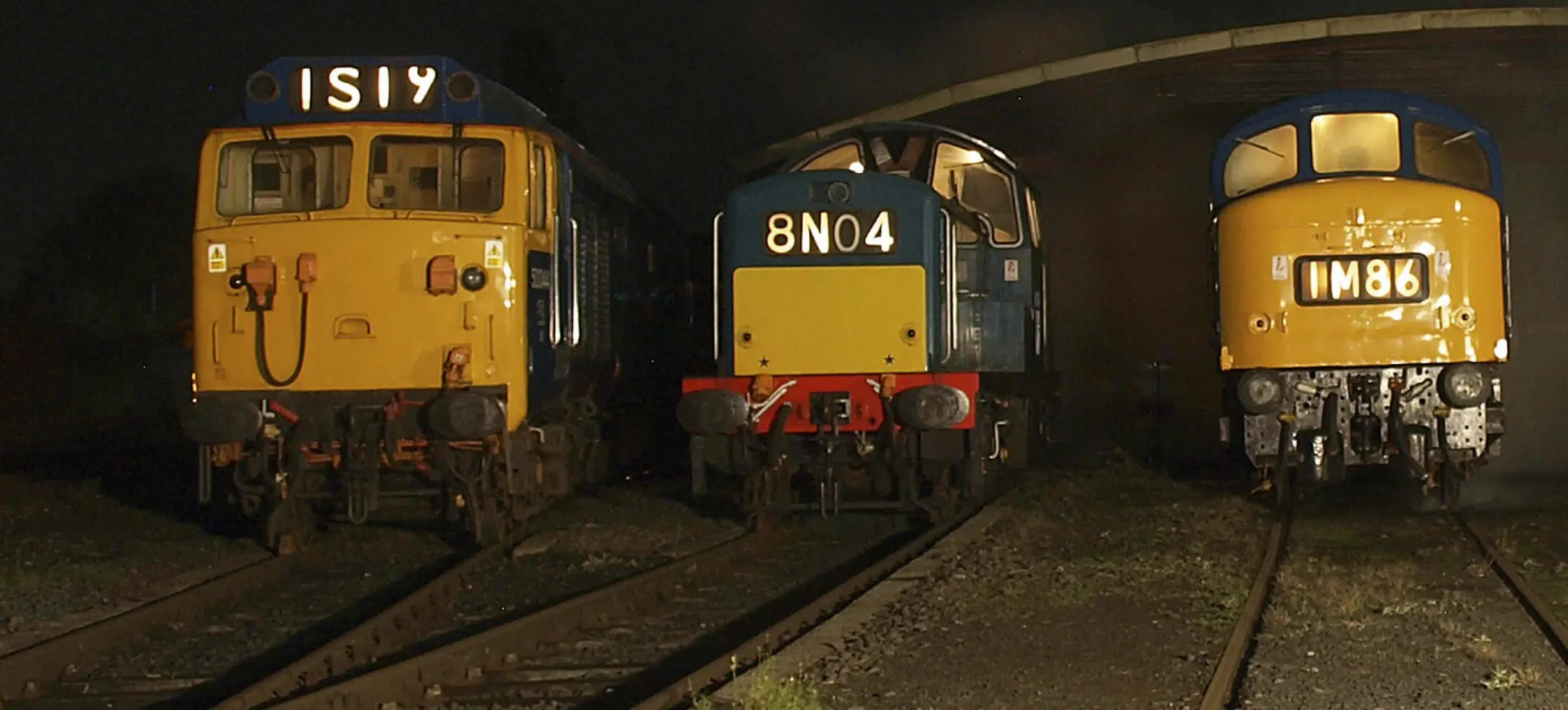
On the evening of October 1st, 2024, the Severn Valley Railway held a photo-shoot ahead of its Autumn Diesel Bash. The theme was to recreate the past sights at two depots; Polmadie circa 1970 and Old Oak Common circa 1981.

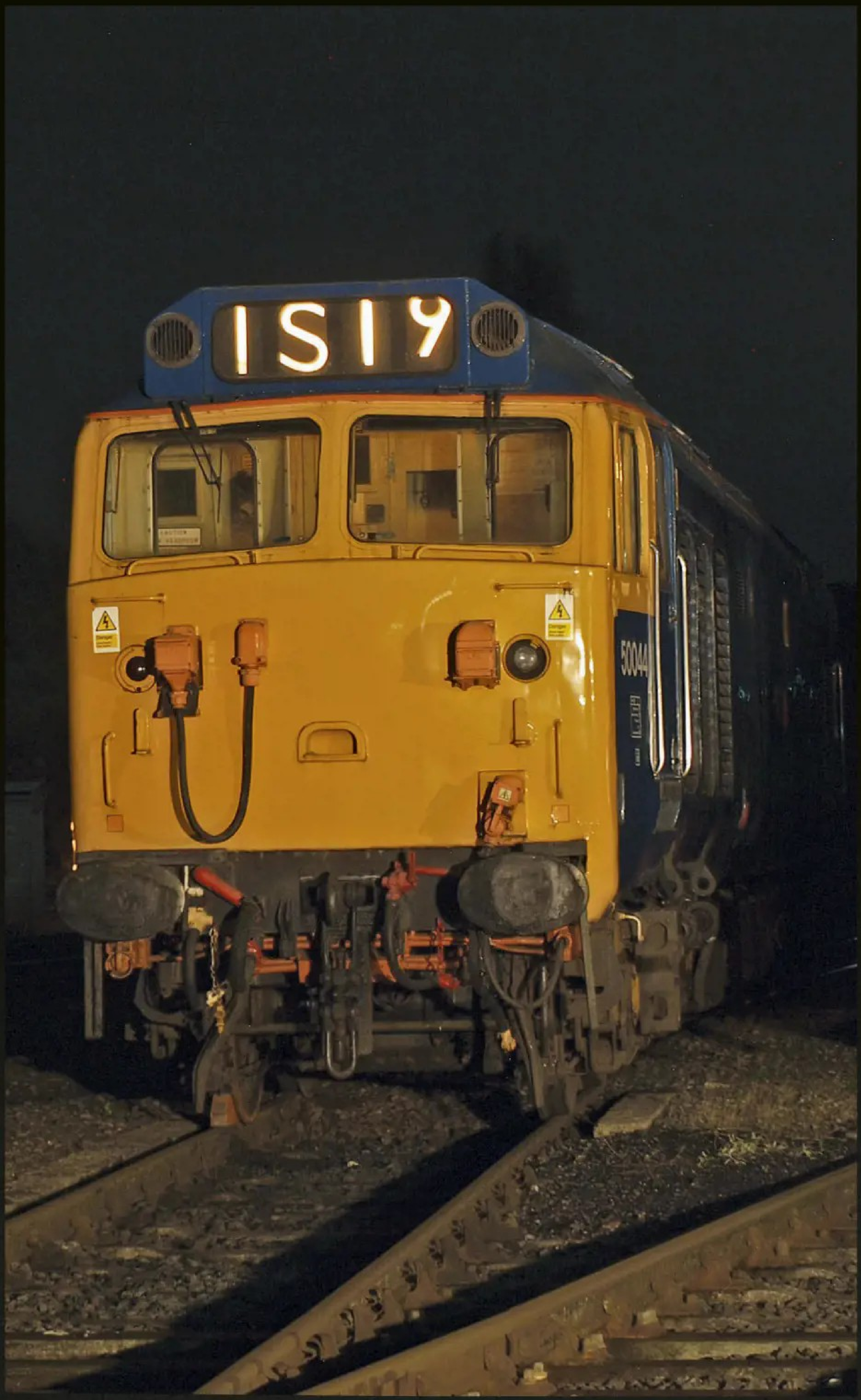
The Polmadie vista was set up outside the Severn Valley Railway's carriage shed, while the Old Oak Common scene was set on and around that depot's former turntable, which is now at Kidderminster adjacent to the diesel Traction Maintenance Depot.



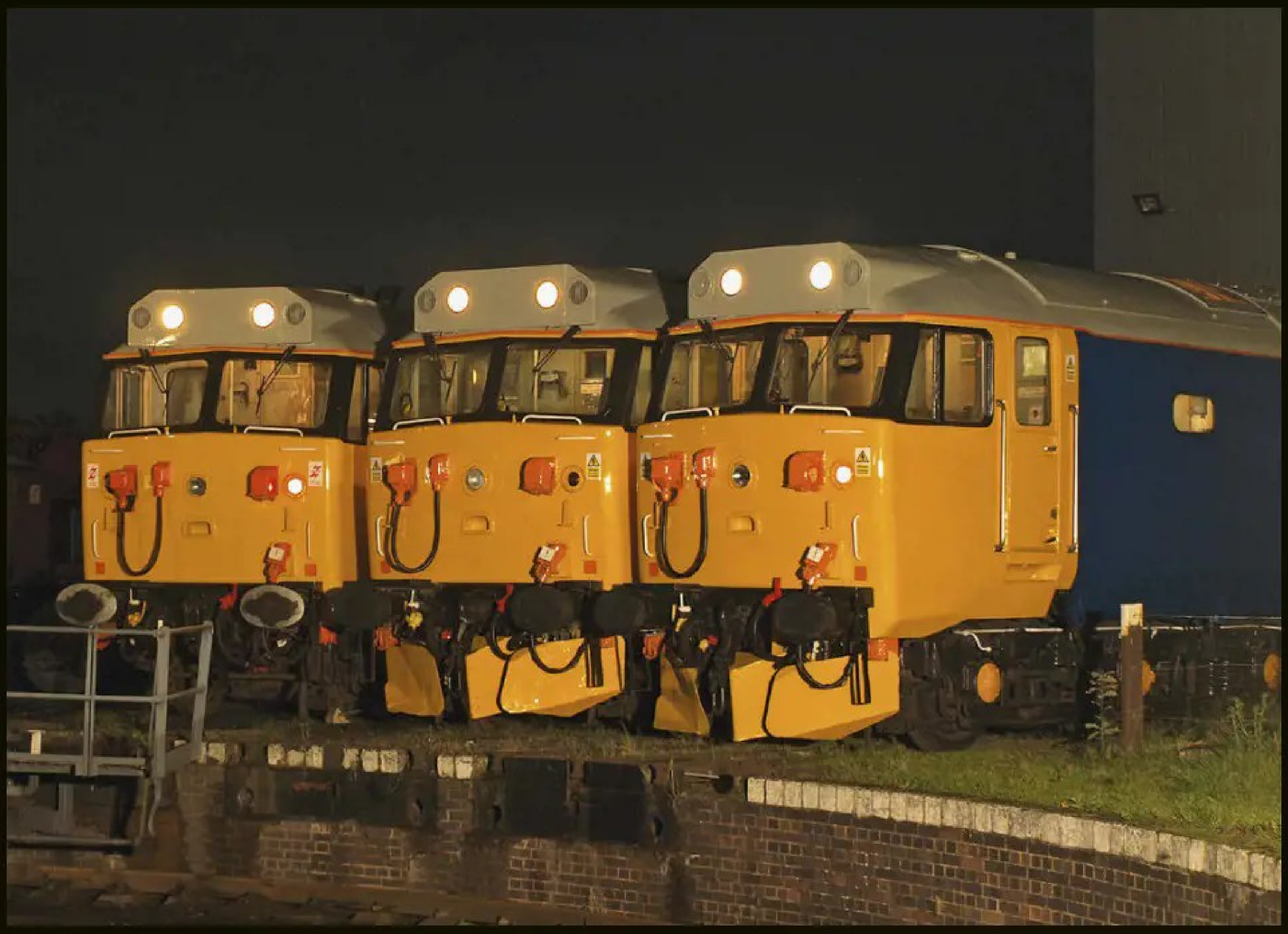
On the former Old Oak Common turntable is 50035 *Ark Royal*, while in the background around it are 50033 *Glorious*, 50049 *Defiance* and 50007 *Hercules*. The latter pair had only recently returned to the SVR following a repaint into Large Logo livery to join 50033, and the three all in the same livery looking resplendent made for a wonderful sight.

The full vista of the Polmadie recreation. From left to right are 50044 *Exeter*, D8568, 46045, 40106, 25262 and a Class 20 pair 20048 and 20189.

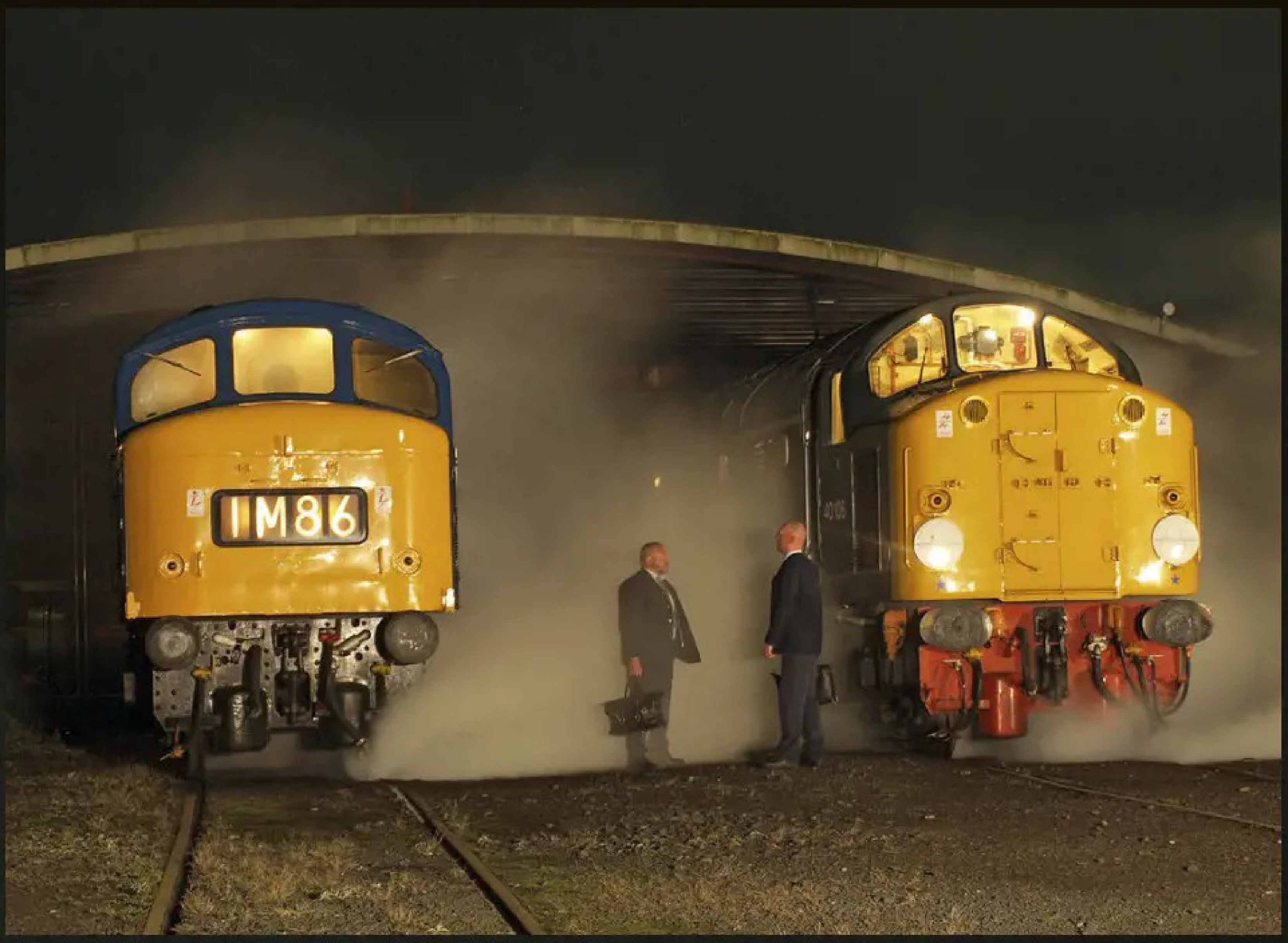




50044 *Exeter* is, like 50035, in un-refurbished condition except that it still has its head-code blinds fitted. It made up the full complement of five Class 50s at the photo-shoot. The head-code suggests that the loco has recently worked 1S19 the Bristol to Glasgow and Edinburgh overnight sleeper service.



Here are the three Large Logo Class 50s 50033 *Glorious*, 50049 *Defiance* and 50007 *Hercules* under the lights. Note that 50049 and 50007 are now both fitted with snowploughs at both ends.



As 46045 and 40106 let off steam, the ‘crew’ discuss the night’s duties. 46045 is obviously allocated to work 1M86, the Glasgow Central to London St. Pancras ‘Thames Clyde Express’ in the morning.

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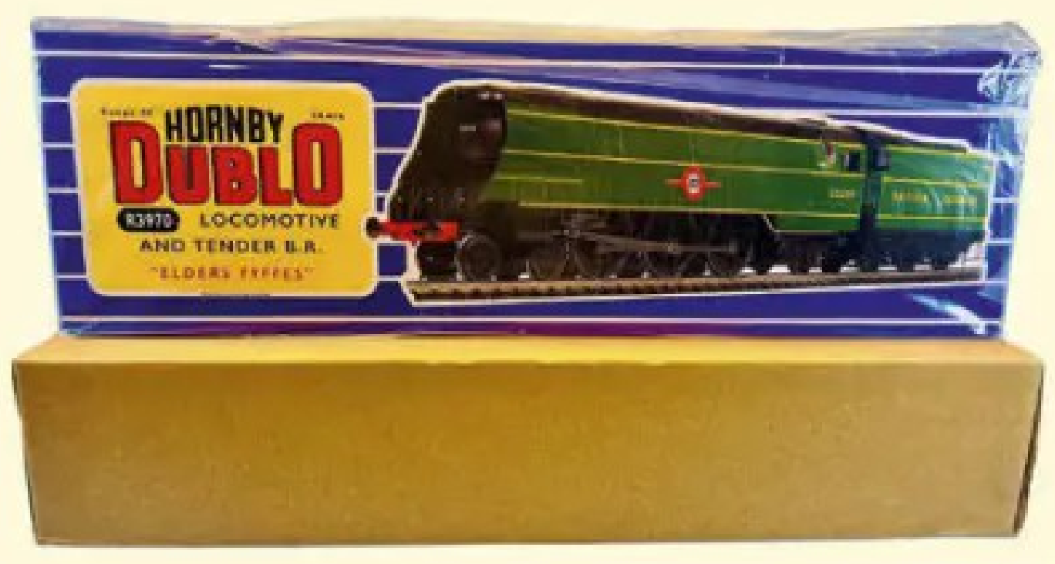

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MORNING FROST

Another excellent micro scene from James Hilton, this time creating a winter scene, which deploys some clever modelling skills to depict a bitterly cold windswept morning at the Severn Beach branch.

Words & photography: James Hilton

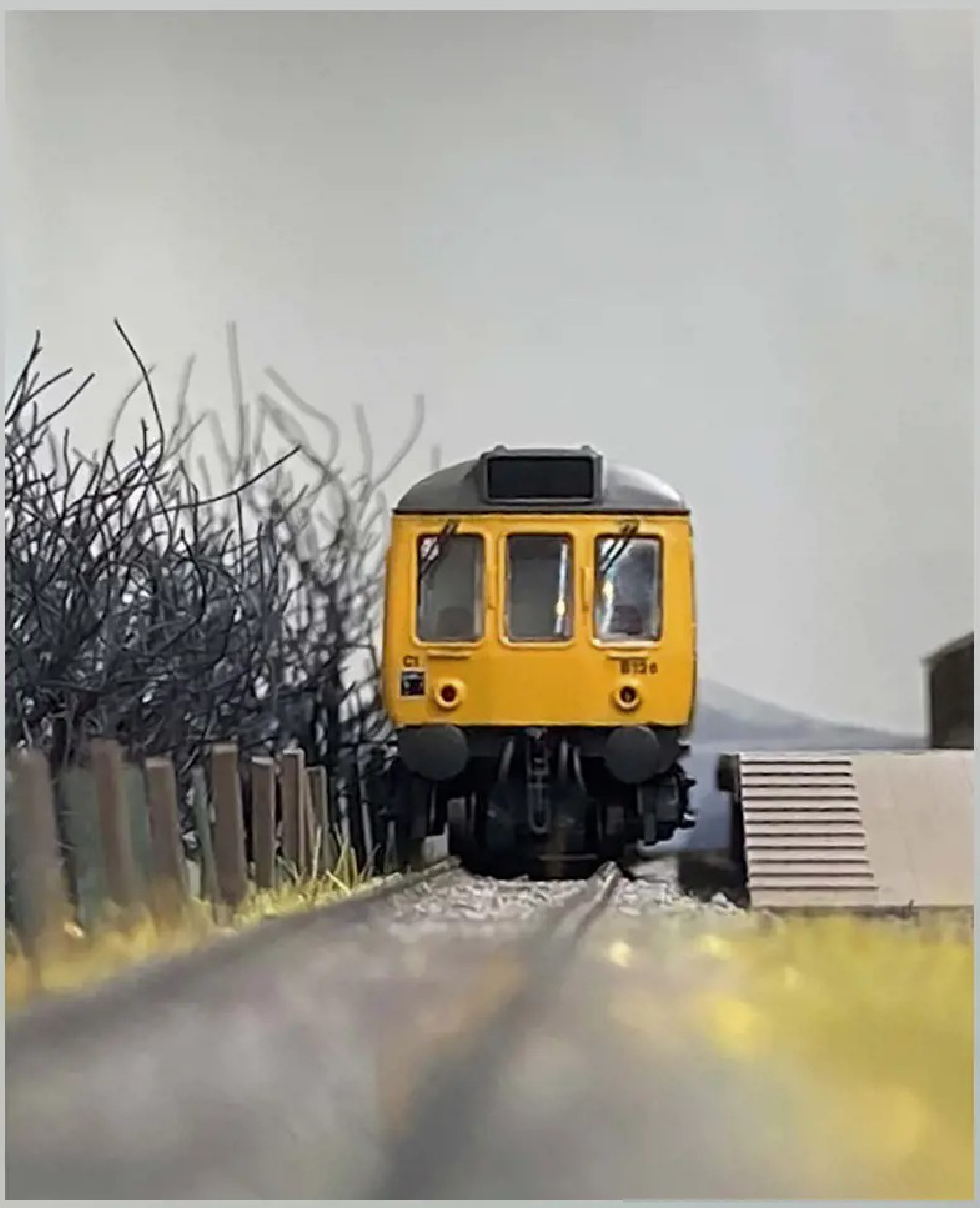
The chemical works at Traeth Hafren is the real reason for the retention of the branch. Here, the locomotive appears to have been drawn forwards into the platform while the crew attends to some problem.

FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Traeth Hafren (Severn Beach)
SCALE/GAUGE: 2mm:1ft/ 9mm/N
SIZE: 55cm x 10cm
ERA/REGION: 80s/Western Region
LAYOUT TYPE: Cameo/Shelf

'Traeth Hafren' was an experiment. Like many of my modelling projects and layouts, it was driven from an emotional connection to a sense of place - but more, this was about refining ideas and techniques and testing out ideas in N scale.

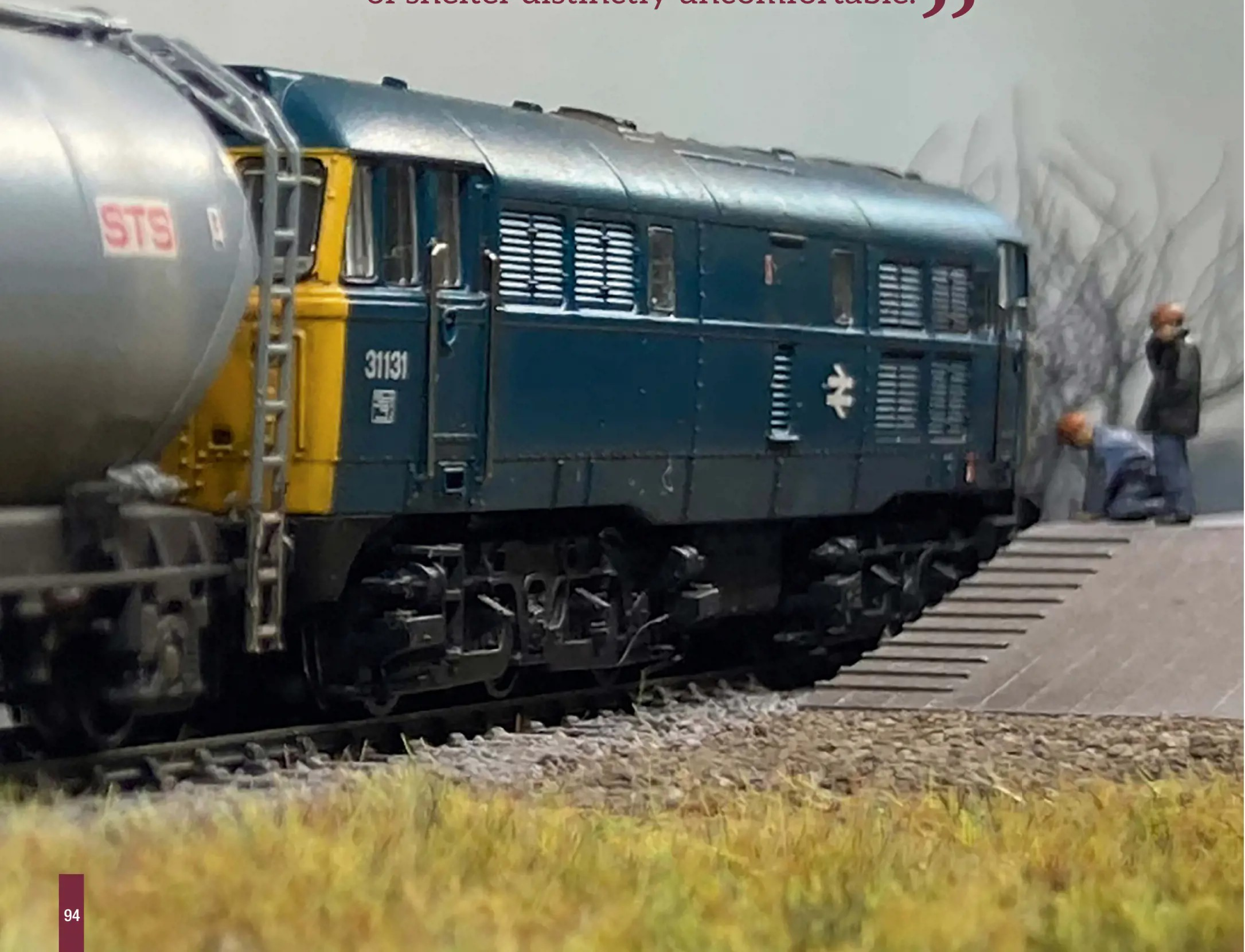
The IKEA Mosslanda shelf that forms the 'baseboard' of this scene is the same as used under 'Wrecsam Canolog', featured in the October 2024 issue of BRM. Swapping the austere gloom of the suburban terminus, 'Traeth Hafren' is a winter's day alongside an estuary, with the Severn Beach branch providing a healthy dose of inspiration. While the layout no longer resides with me here in North Wales, looking back at these photos, I am transported to the photograph that inspired this whole project. More, through personal experience of similar places, I can imagine the cold wind blowing in down the estuary, the drizzle in this windswept location making the lack of shelter distinctly uncomfortable. Austere gloom of a different sort, and just as with 'Wrexham', waiting for the train is a mixture of eager anticipation and imminent rescue.

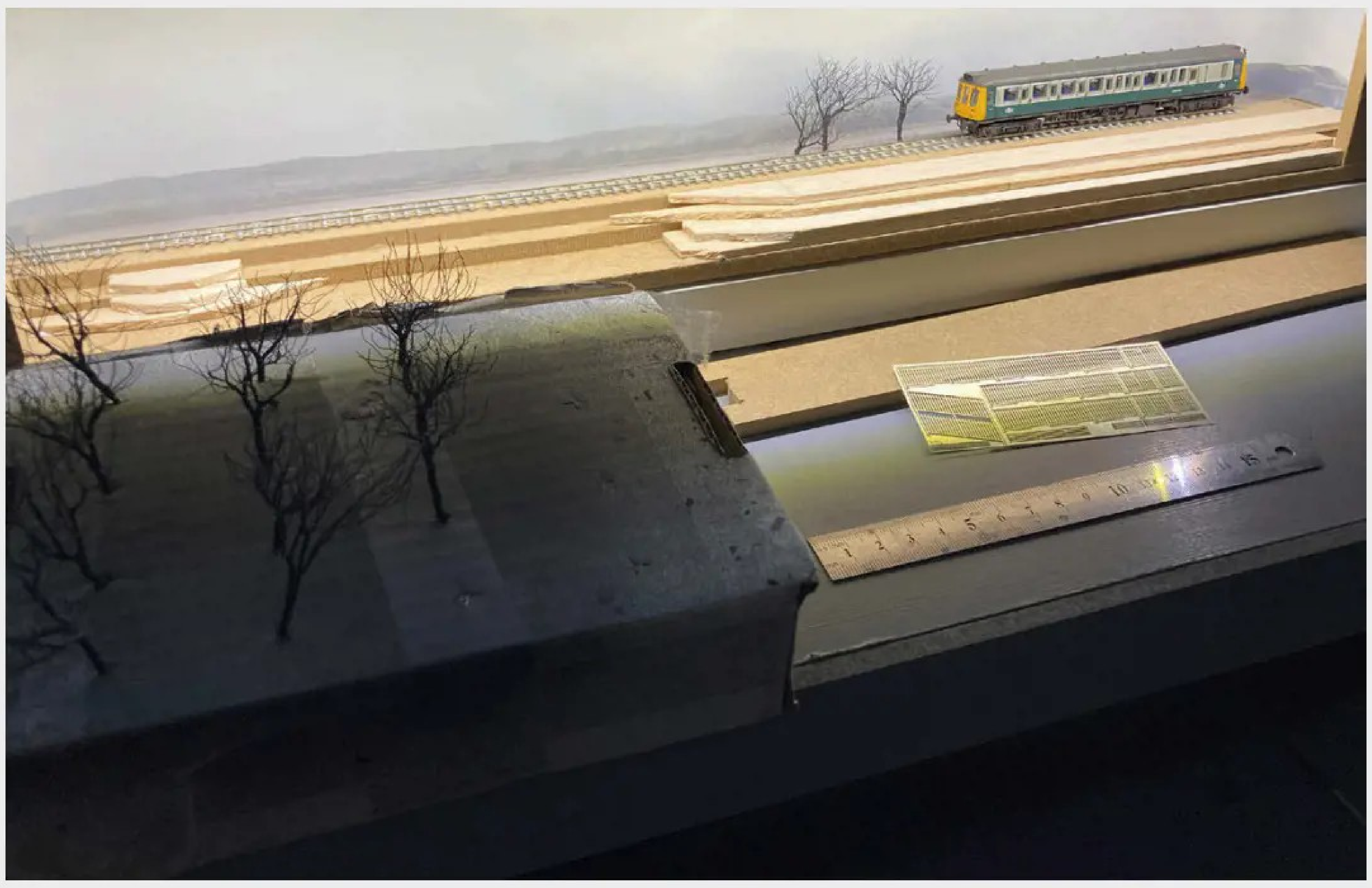


TOP LEFT: While this view is not one readily achieved in normal circumstances, the wonder of a mobile phone camera meant I could get a view along the track through the fiddlestick access hole! Of course, in reality, we're standing on the occupation crossing, pausing momentarily while the 121 burbles, stationary, fruitlessly waiting for custom at 'Traeth Hafren'.

BELOW: The PiChem chemical works is the reason the 'Traeth Hafren' branch survived as long as it did. After rationalisation, the inbound train could be seen at the station before propelling back into the works.

> "I can imagine the cold wind blowing in down the estuary, the drizzle in this windswept location making the lack of shelter distinctly uncomfortable."





Baseboard and landform

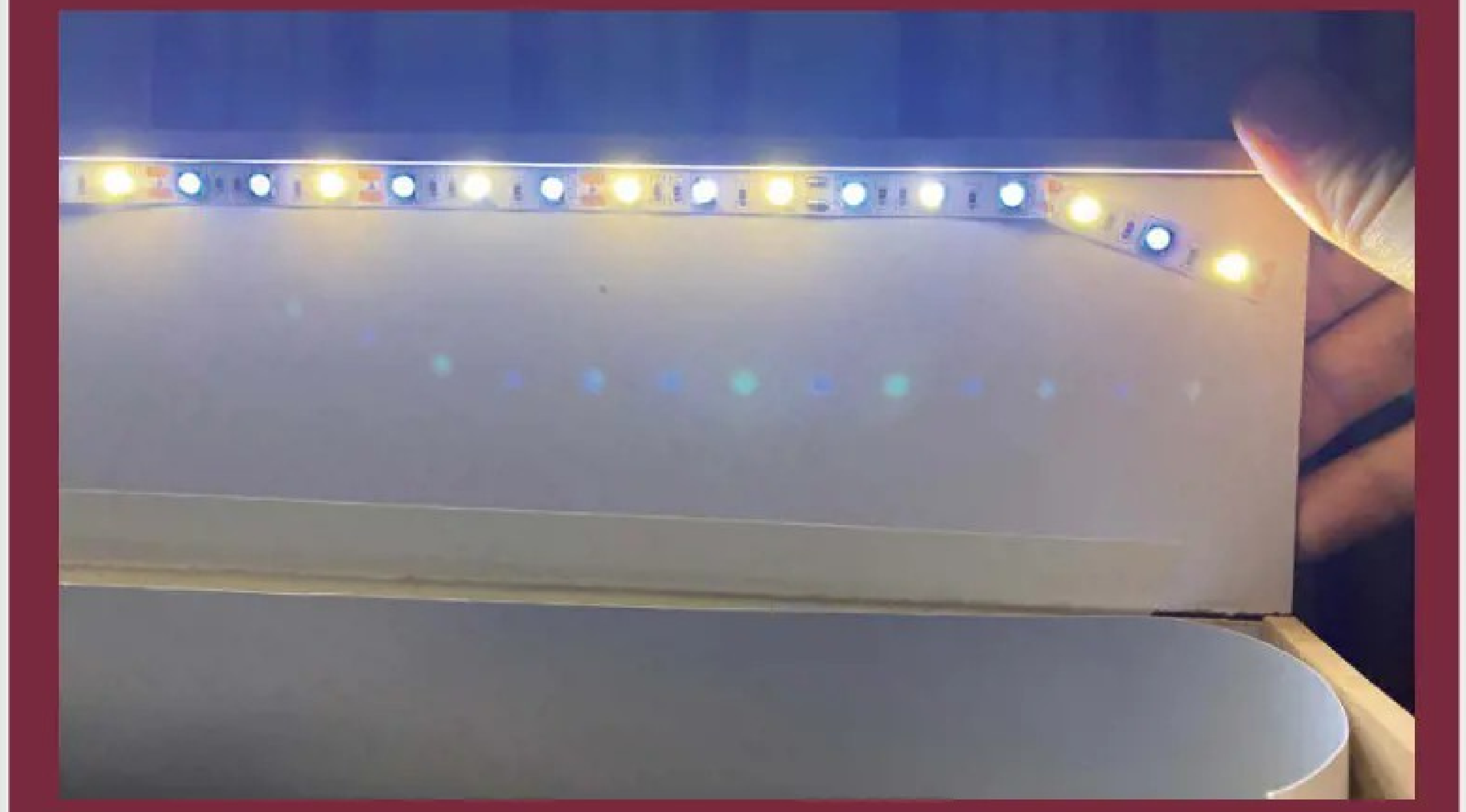
The secret to working with the IKEA Mosslanda shelf is to keep everything simple. I build up the 'box' from 6mm MDF (base, fiddle stick, ends and wings) and 4mm white-backed hardboard (roof and back). The lid has a small pelmet added to hide the LED lighting strip, and the white-backed hardboard of the lid reflects much of this down into the scene. The trackbed is 6mm MDF, and with careful thought, a hidden fiddle-stick support can be stowed under the layout and pulled out when required to run a train. The ground is made up from various off-cuts; in the case of 'Traeth Hafren', I had some old balsa to use up and covered with filler, sealed with paint and scenic'd in the usual manner.

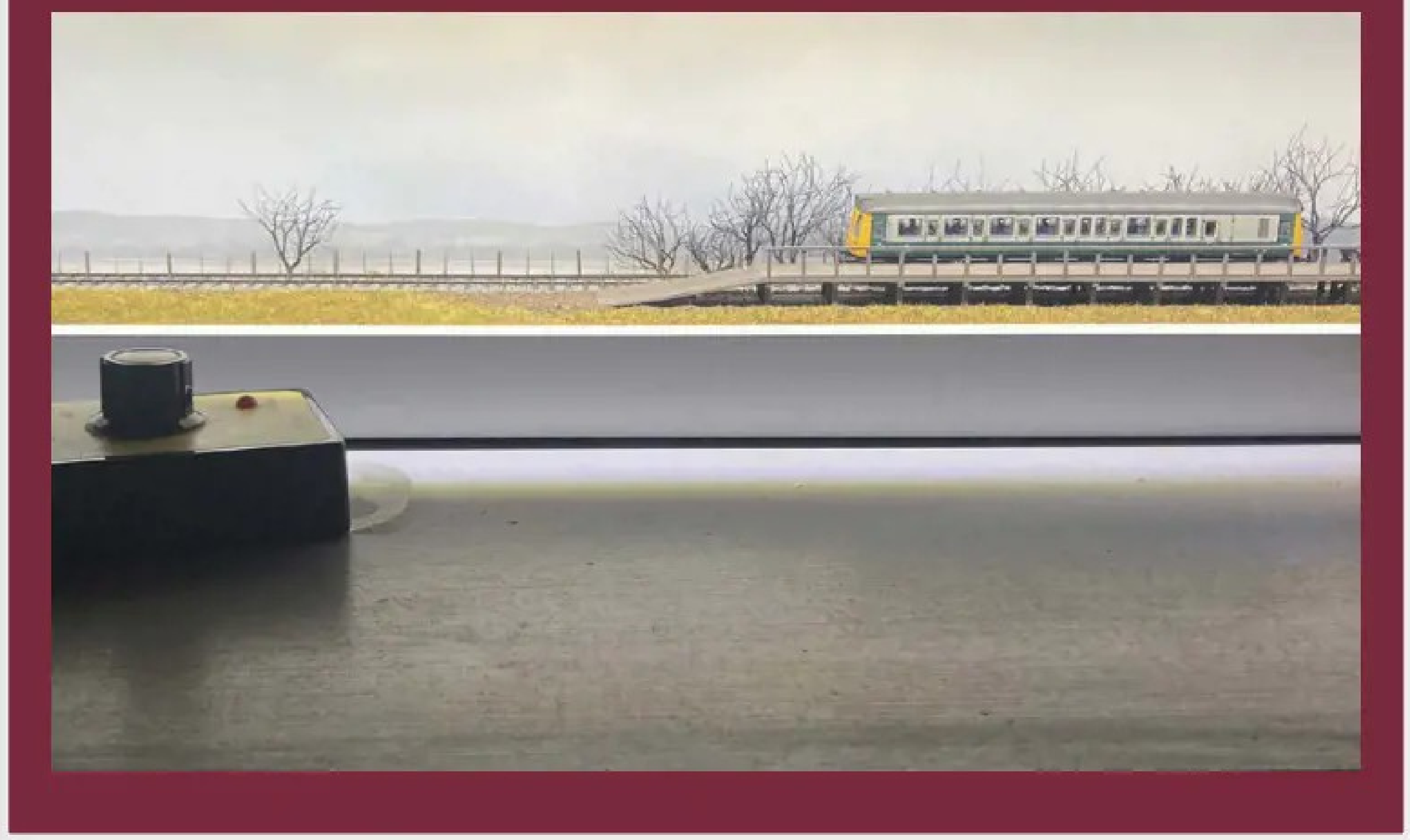
The backscene feels very much an integral part of setting the scene in such a small and compact layout. This uses an overcast sky from the ID Backscenes range as the base to which I have overlaid a suitable edited and faded section of the real Severn estuary, printed on my home printer, cut out very carefully with a scalpel and glued on with Pritt Stick.

None of these methods is complicated, but working neatly ensures the end result is more believable - and accepted into the family home as a permanent display.

Winter lighting

I use a high-quality 12v natural white LED strip with a colour temperature of 4000k on all the layouts I build. For this winter scene, I wanted to experiment with this to see if adjusting the colour temperature would help the model feel colder. First experiments using a blue sharpie showed promise, but the intensity or heat of the LED seemed to fade the pen over time. Spurred on, I sourced some Tamiya 'Clear Blue' X-23 - this had the same effect and didn't fade. You can experiment with the amount of adjustment by changing how many of the LEDs you paint over - in the end, I opted for a 50/50 split in this installation.

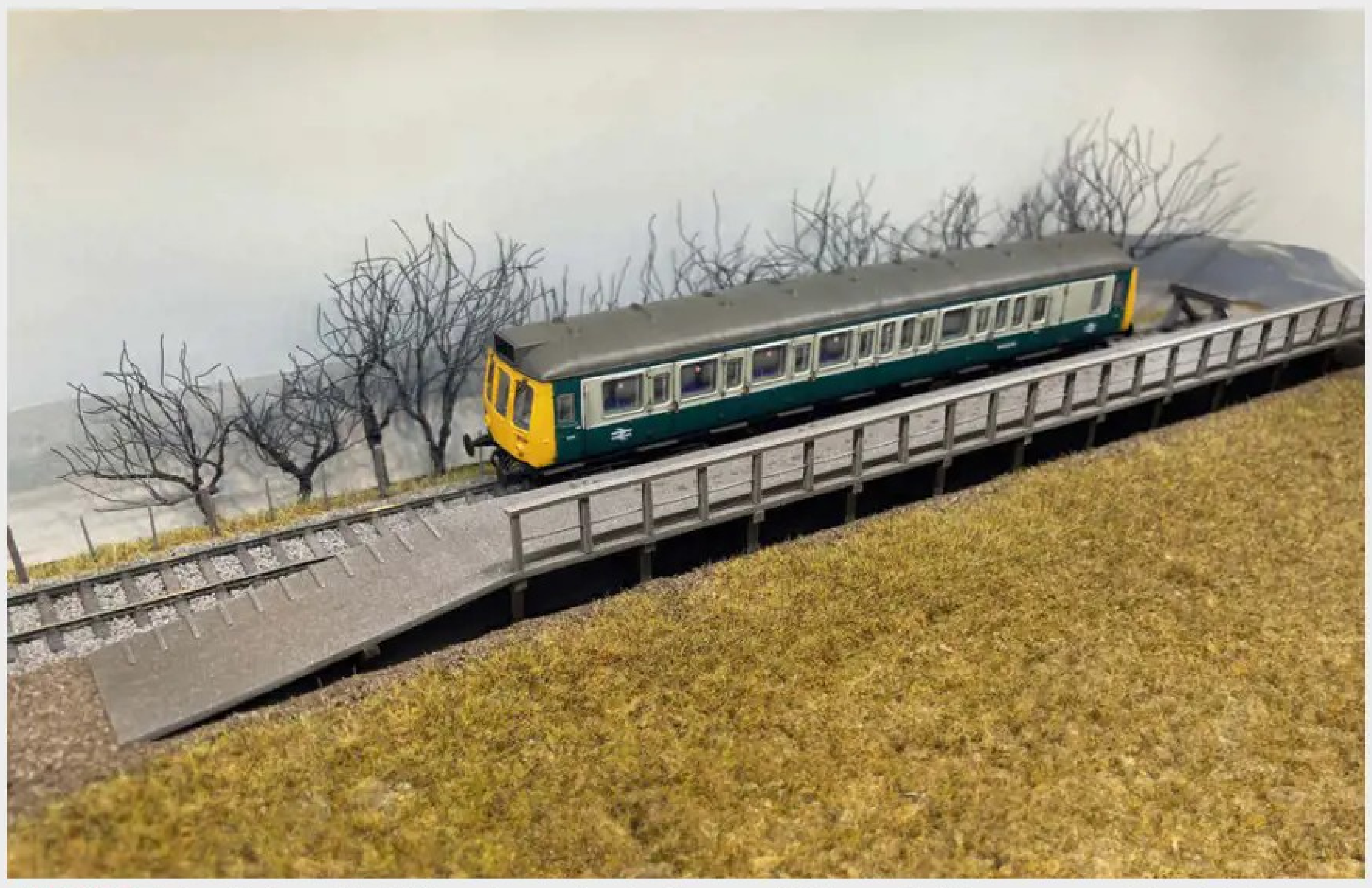




Frosty platform

The platform is scratch-built in styrene and painted in a dark grey brown, which felt suitably subdued for the winter setting. When I first installed it, however, it felt a little dead, as if it didn't belong in the scene. I wanted to suggest a frost, and show the footsteps of passengers and staff on the surface. I sprayed white primer from above over the whole layout to add a slight tinge of frost to the hard surfaces (sleepers as well as the platform). Crafting a small 'foot' from an off-cut of styrene, this was used to walk footprints on the surface using a grey-brown shade. I was pleased with how this looked but it still felt a little dead. You know when you see a frost it almost glints and glimmers, so I wondered if a little gloss lacquer might bring it to life?

The result was perfect, I could almost feel the frost, or light slush, on the platform - and the relief in sitting down on one of those comfortable seats aboard the cosy 121.



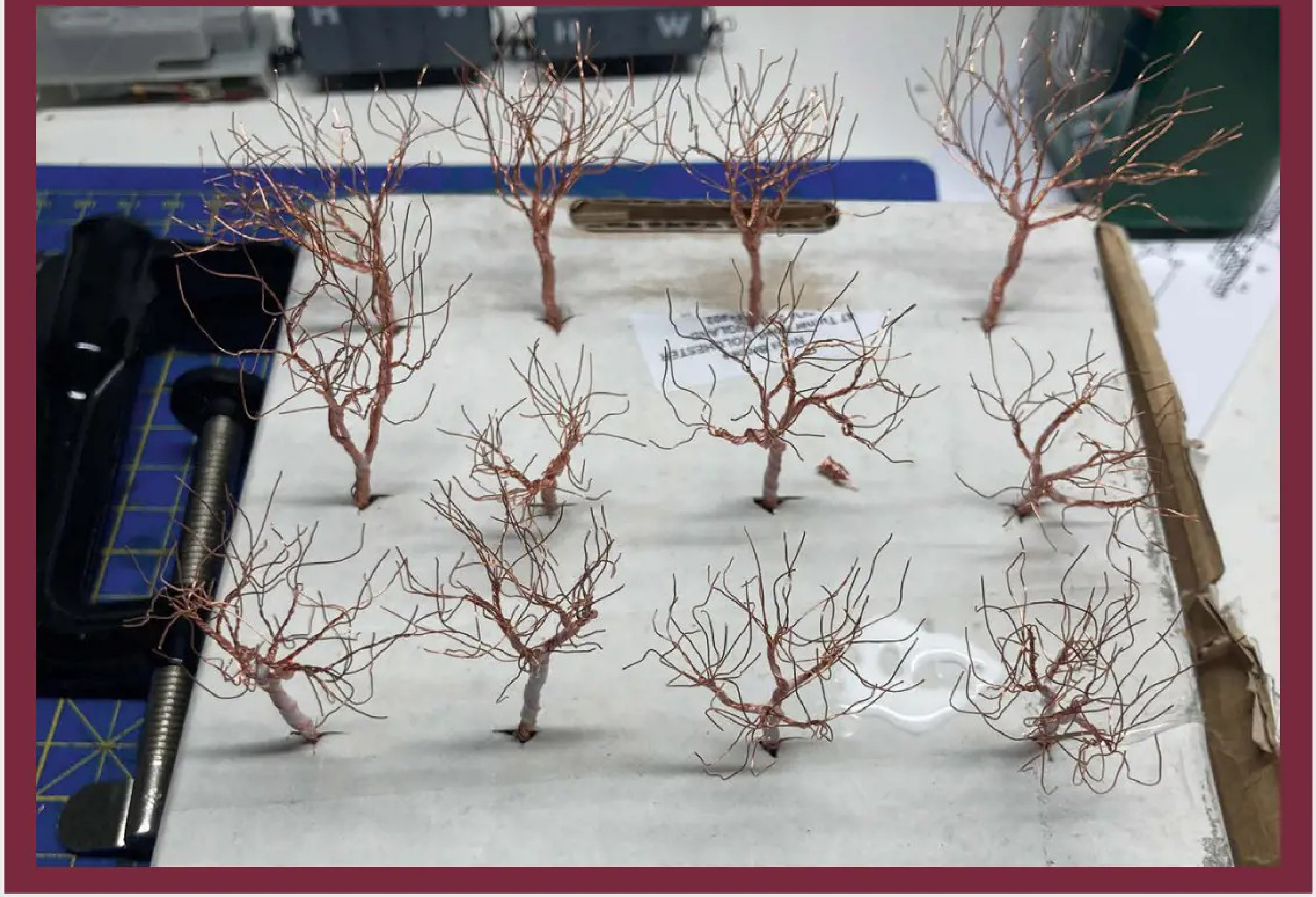
ABOVE: In this slightly elevated view of the platform and bubble car, you can see the effect of the platform treatment; this touch really adds to the realism of the scene. Note the use of yellow and brown shades in the static grass, too; very evocative of the marshy ground you often encounter along these windswept estuary locations.

BELOW: There was a run-around loop on site, so once the loads and empties had been exchanged, the train would propel back onto the branch, visible again at Traeth, before heading back to the yard.

Winter trees

I like to make my own trees for each model I work on and in recent times have enjoyed experimenting with copper filament and twisting each twig, to a branch, to the trunk. For trees with foliage or of a larger size, even in N, I have used the 45A twisted copper core cable sold for wiring camper van conversions, I found a supplier on eBay who offered it in 1m lengths. However, on 'Traeth Hafren', the same material seemed too thick for the sort of scrubby, thin and slightly anaemic trees I remember in the marshy ground. These grow tightly packed, reaching for the light, but never get very tall - whether this is the weather or ground conditions, I don't know, but representing these in N scale was a challenge. Switching from using the heavier 45A copper wire, I wondered if I could look at normal household 13A flexible cable, would the copper strands be finer? The answer was yes, and while a lot more fiddly and prone to damage, the results were just what I was looking for. Two strands are twisted together to form a pair, this is repeated until you have enough pairs to twist each together to create a pair of pairs, and so on... a great activity to do on a rainy winter's day.

Once each was formed, I apply neat PVA to the trunk to hold the form and also thicken this slightly. They were sprayed with several shades of primer (grey first, then black from below and white from above) to get that wintry feel I wanted for the layout. Using an old drill bit, I formed holes in the scenery and planted these once the basic finish had been achieved, securing each with a dab of PVA on its base before pushing home. The thin wire branches are springy, and to get that tightly packed feel, I deliberately pushed them up together, forcing the branches to fight for space as they do in reality.



ABOVE: The passenger service, just a token four trains a day and slow speeds, didn't warrant a lot of maintenance, so this scene with a 'Rat' and pair of 'Dogfish' must be a rare example of the permanent way team addressing some winter damage on the line.

What these micro layouts demonstrate is that everyone has room for a serious model railway. With the small fiddlestick stored, the lights can be left on and the 3D scene enjoyed by all who share the home with me - a secondary benefit is the speed that an idea can be realised - and I suppose further, the lower cost of failure encourages the testing of new ideas (in this case the winter scene led to thoughts on colour temperature, representing winter trees and the feel of frost on the platform and landscape). The challenge that many level at such a simple scheme is 'it's boring' or 'there is no operation'. Neither is true, of course, and if you can see the potential in 'Traeth Hafren', 'Wrecsam Canolog', or perhaps your own single track terminus, then I'd encourage you to have a go, use the opportunity to try out a new idea, a new technique, build a home for that one item of stock that doesn't fit with the rest on your layout… the reasons can be endless, but the results, no matter what some might say, are very much worthwhile. ■

> “What these micro layouts demonstrate is that everyone has room for a serious model railway.”

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The platelayers' hut and other humble railway buildings

By Clive Baker

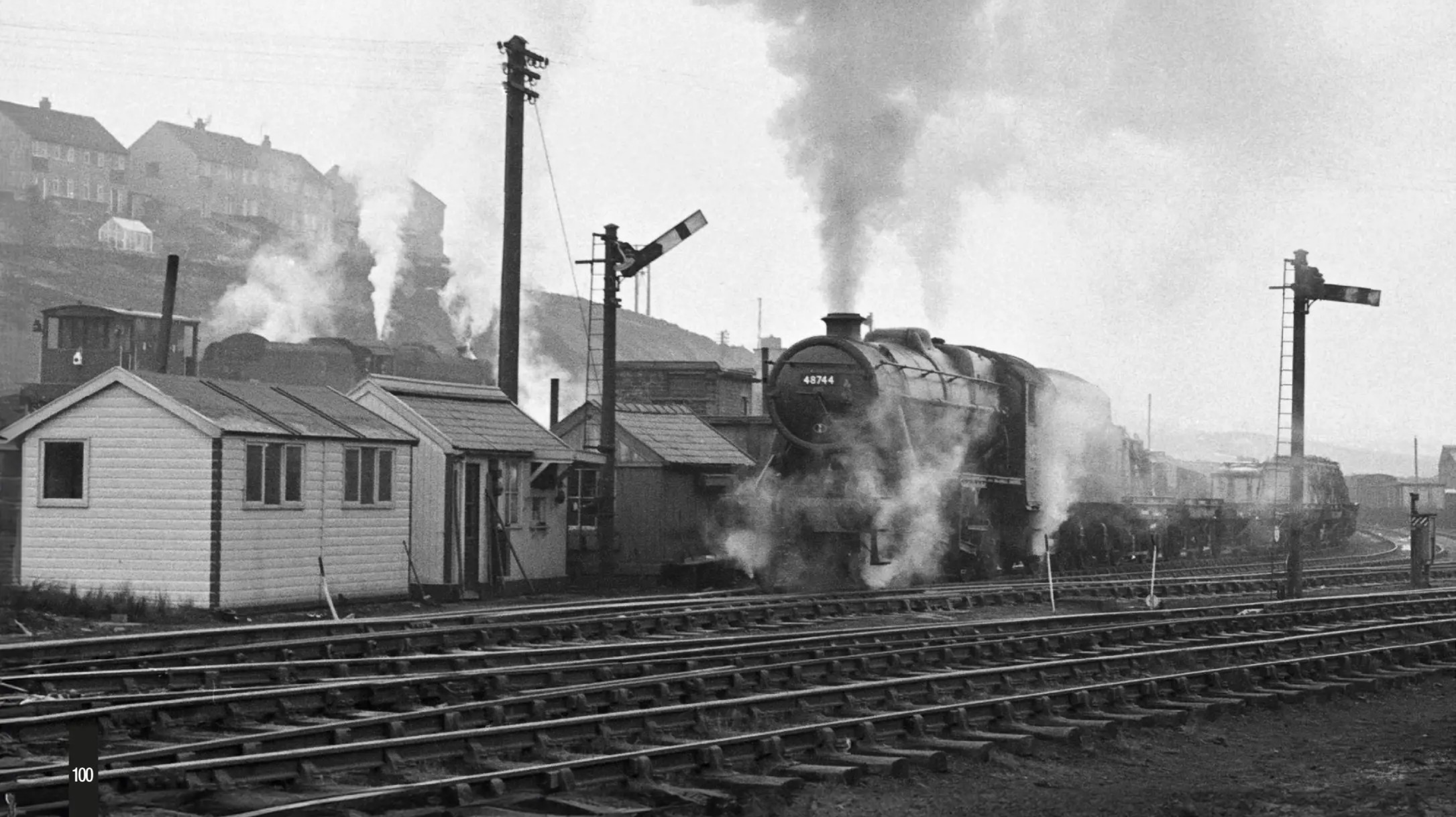
In this article, I will be discussing not only platelayers' huts but similar humble, single-storey buildings that have had a railway purpose, in particular, weighbridge offices.

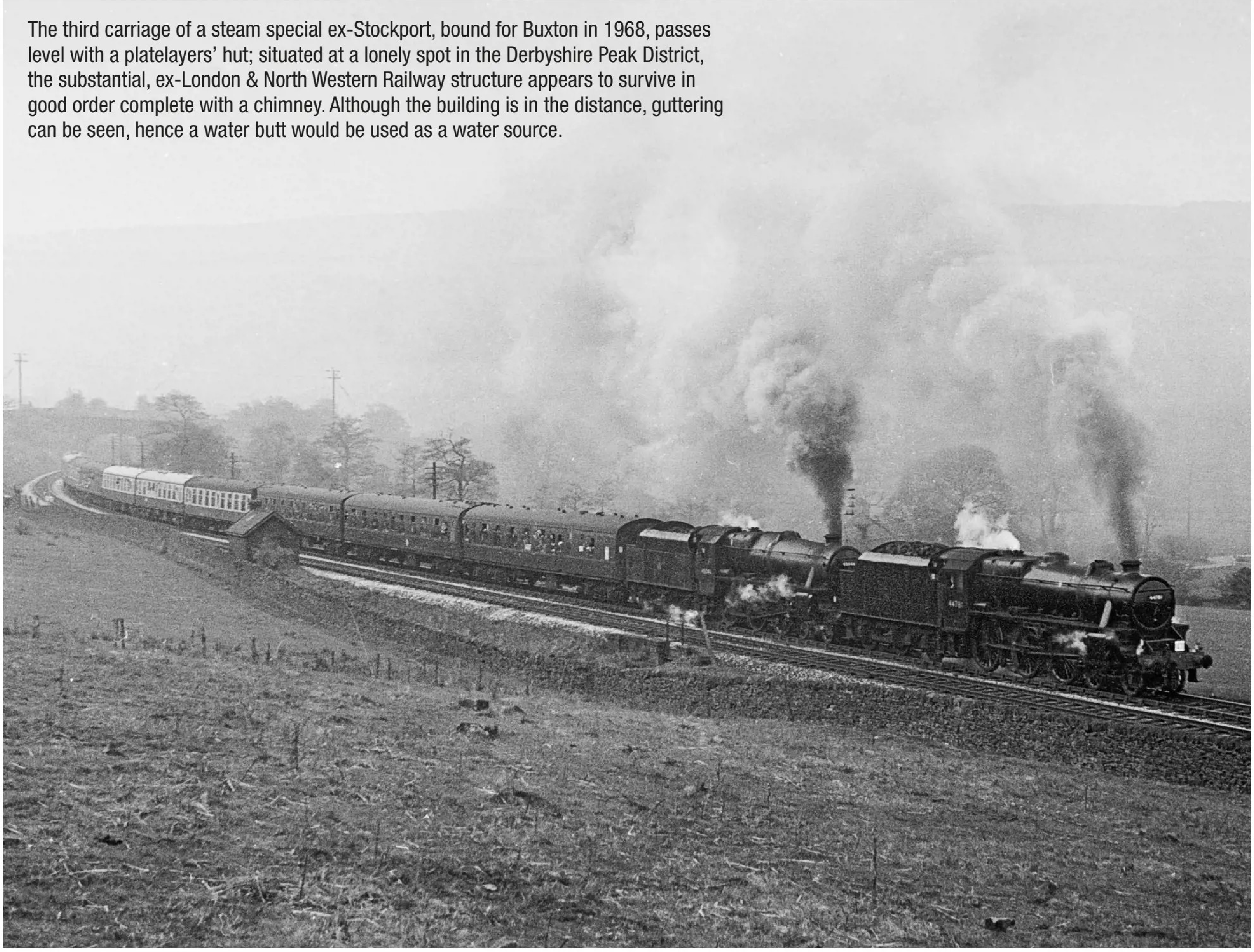
The term platelayer refers to a person who puts down track, the title arising from construction of the early 'plateways' when plates or planks would be laid on the ground to provide a smooth surface on which to run minecars or wheeled quarry tubs. The type of building featured would usually be constructed after track-laying had been completed for the purposes of a 'lengthman' whose job involved maintaining the track and related infrastructure over a distance of 2-3 miles.

The platelayers' hut acted as both bothy and tool store for the benefit of the lengthman. Having the responsibility for the good condition of a stretch of permanent way that required daily inspection, the trackside hut became an essential part of what could be a lonely occupation. The length of responsibility could vary depending on whether the track was single or multiple.

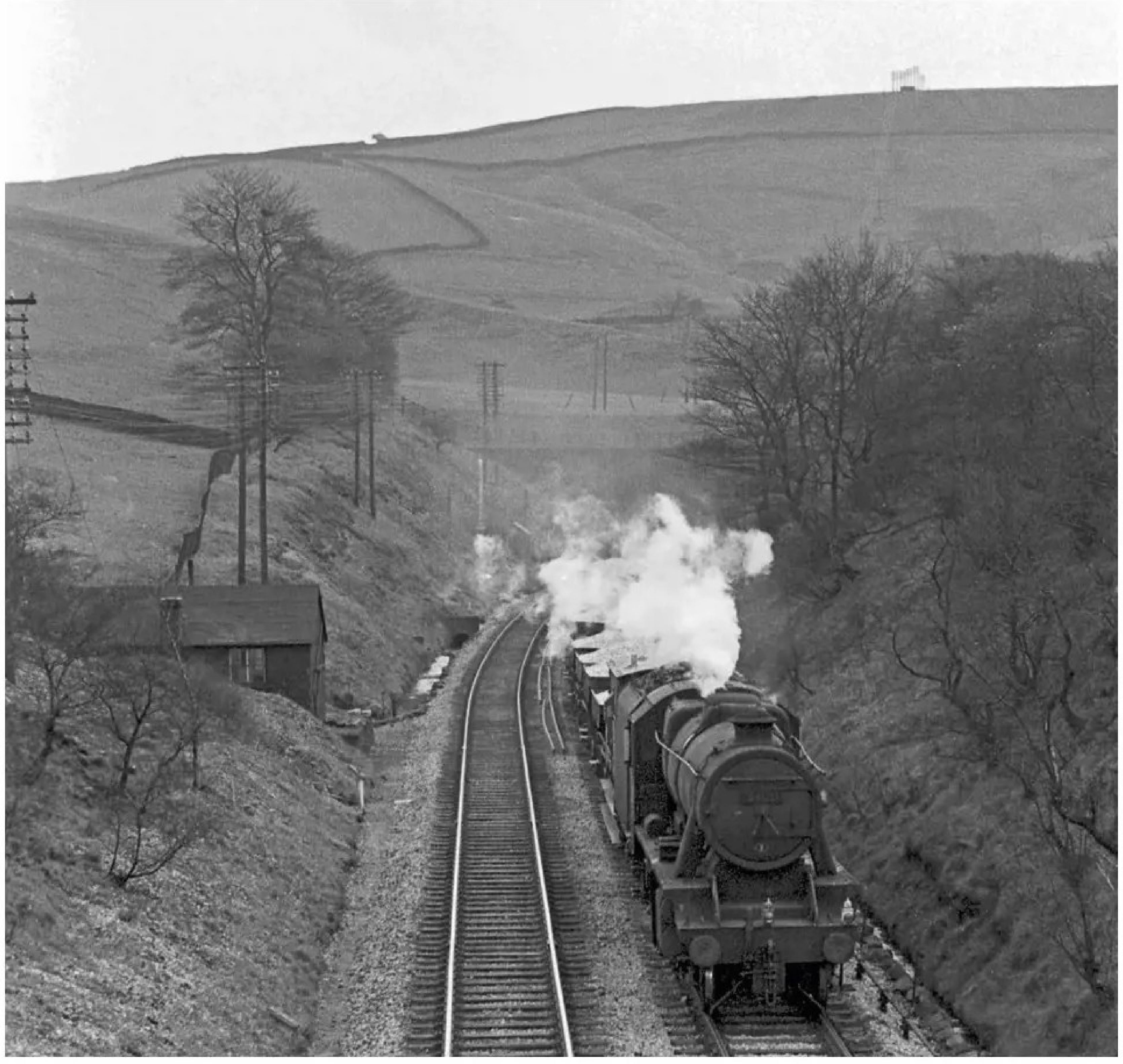
Examples could be observed along every British railway route – in deep cuttings adjacent to tunnel mouths, by the side of exposed embankments and high above sea level bolted to the steelwork of the Forth railway bridge.

At Buxton goods yard, three single-storey, timber structures are evident. On the left is a modern prefabricated 'shed'; its type could be found in a domestic garden, but to the right is a more railway-like hut. The canopy above a ticket-type window suggests that it could be a signing-on office; also a telephone bell is mounted on the wall, far right. The third building appears to have a sliding door, which would suggest that it serves as a store.

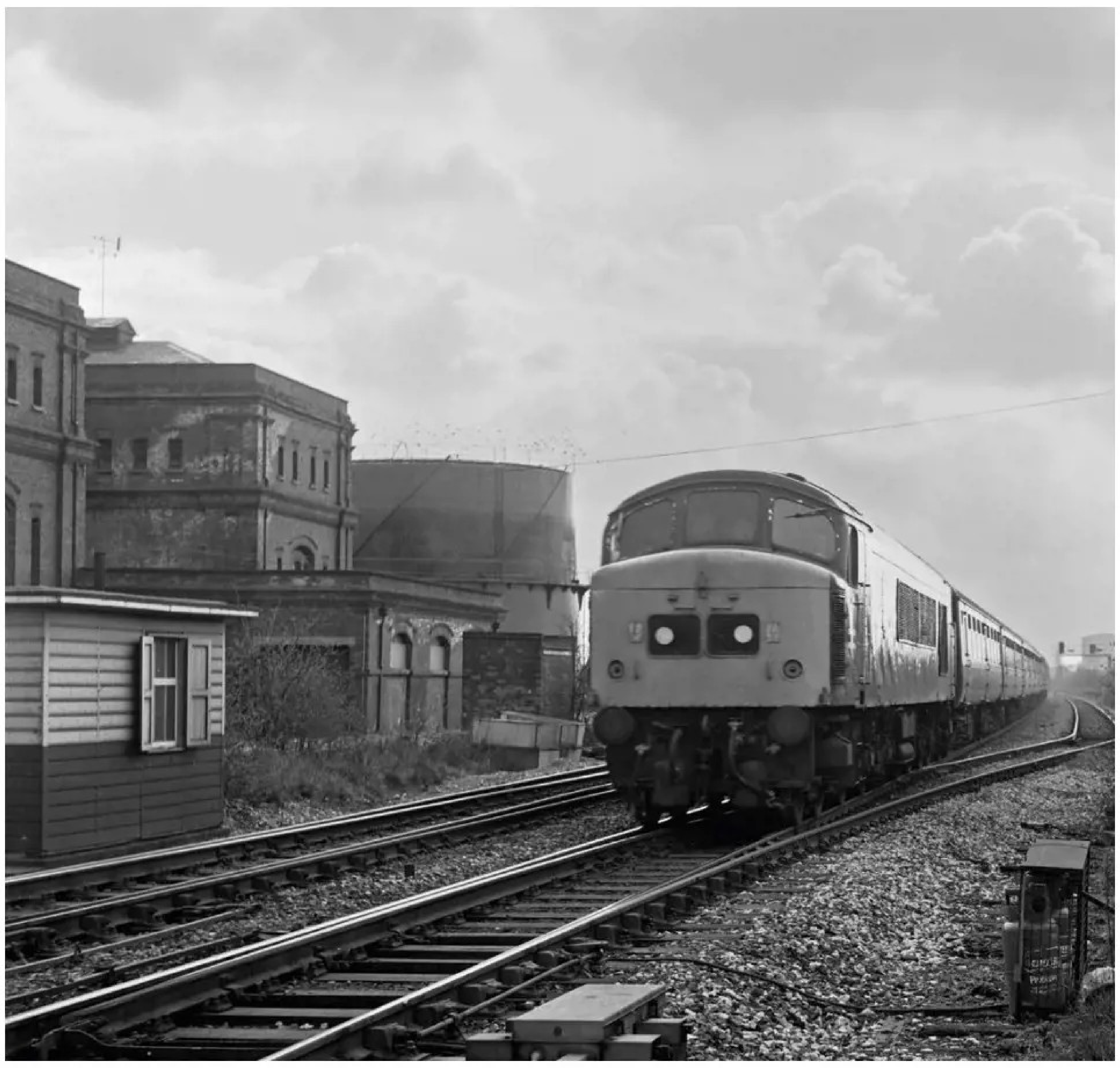




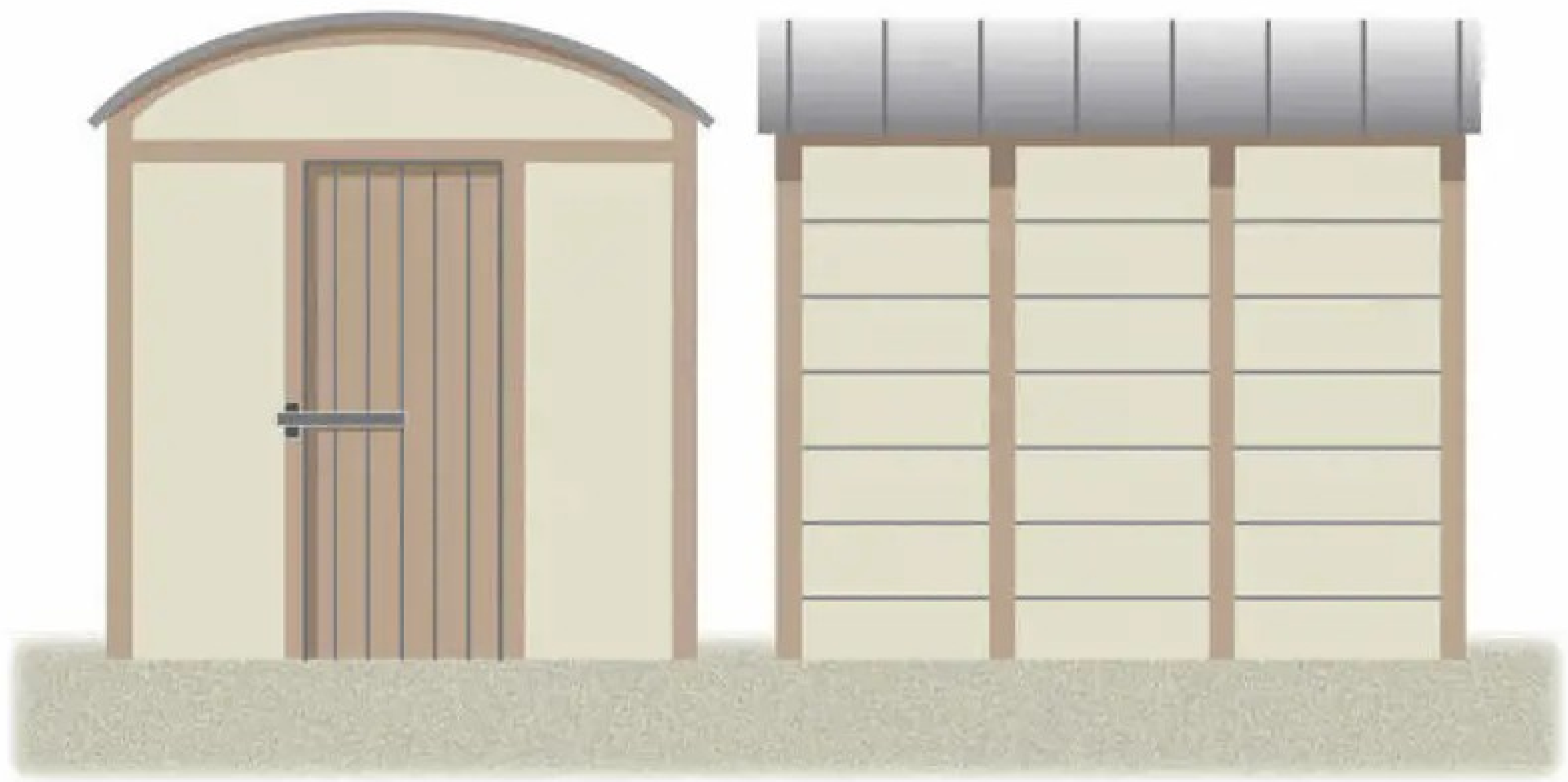
The third carriage of a steam special ex-Stockport, bound for Buxton in 1968, passes level with a platelayers' hut; situated at a lonely spot in the Derbyshire Peak District, the substantial, ex-London & North Western Railway structure appears to survive in good order complete with a chimney. Although the building is in the distance, guttering can be seen, hence a water butt would be used as a water source.



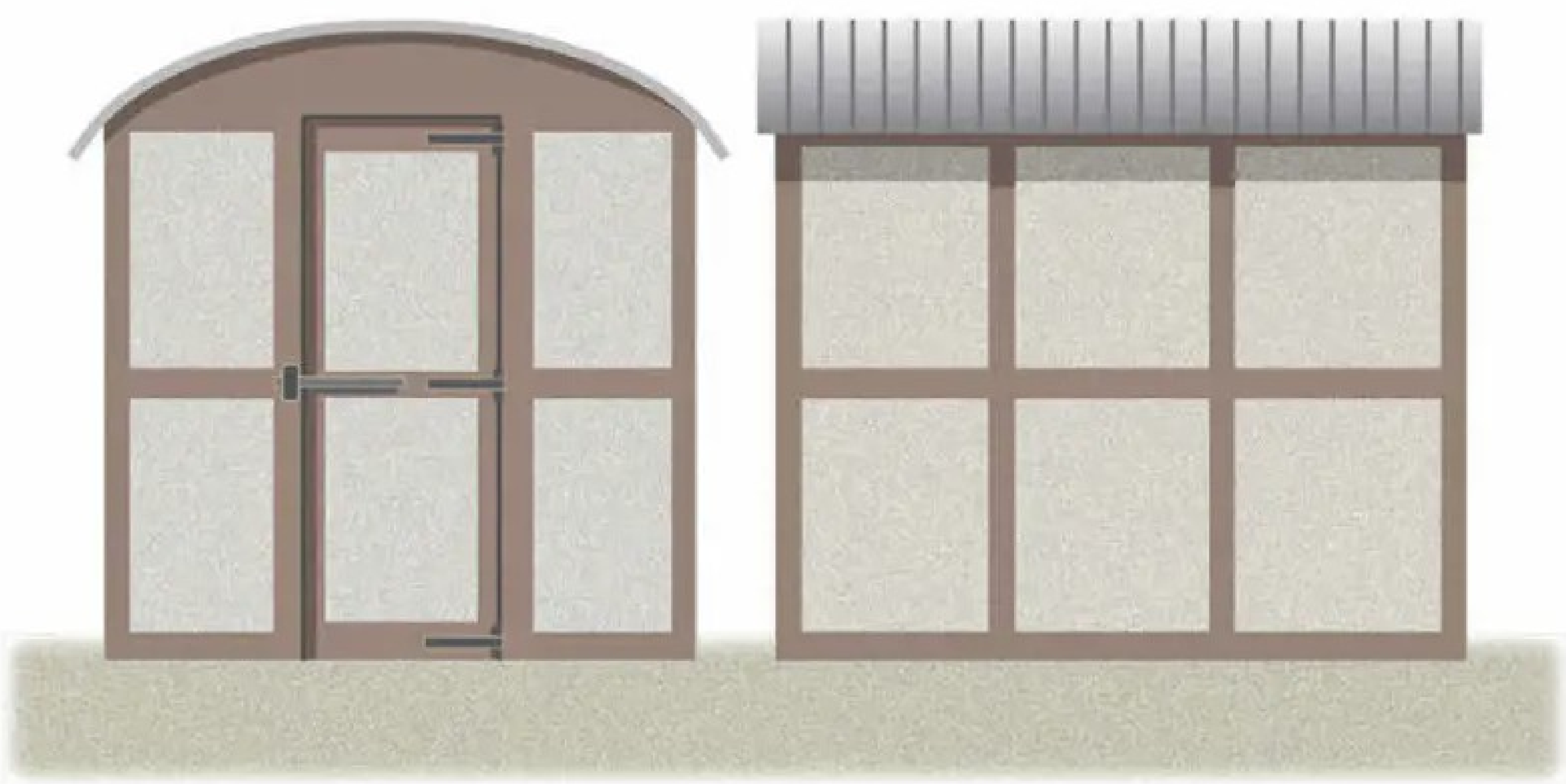
This large timber structure, complete with chimney, has been built into the side of the cutting on the approach to Dove Holes Tunnel in Derbyshire. Its walls are erected from timber planks set vertically and the roof would be felted. Between the building and track, an open culvert disappears into a tunnel; a notoriously wet tunnel, during its building, a river needed to be diverted and pumps installed. This larger-than-usual trackside building could have housed pumps.



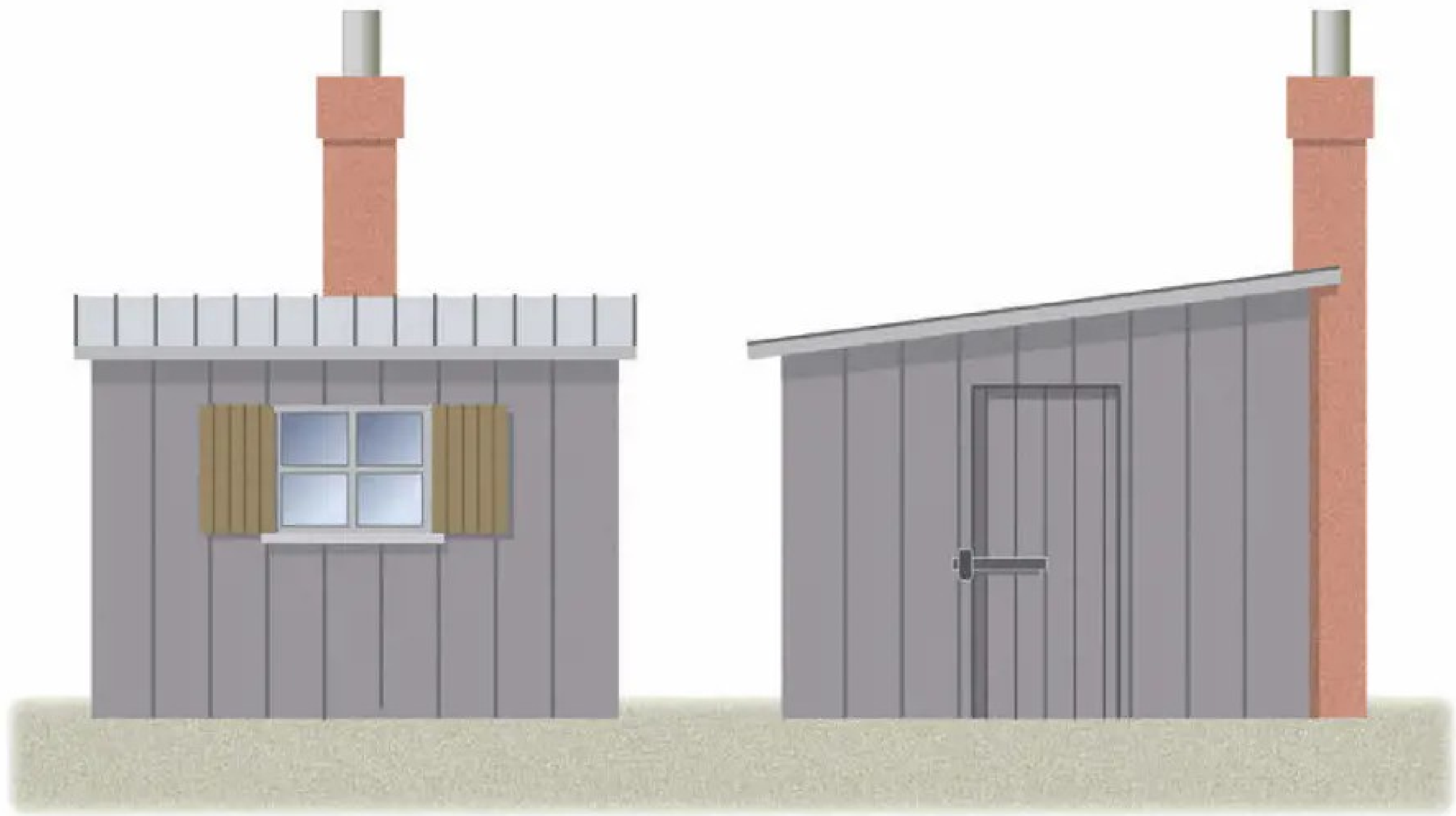
The Class 45 diesel-hauled train is about to pass Claymills Junction signal box circa 1982, but before that, a platelayers' hut of the 'modern era' comes into view. The prefabricated structure consisting of horizontally slatted walls and overhanging flat felted roof has been painted in crimson and cream livery to match the neighbouring signal box. Note the shuttered windows, a necessary feature of most such buildings, particularly those in isolated areas.



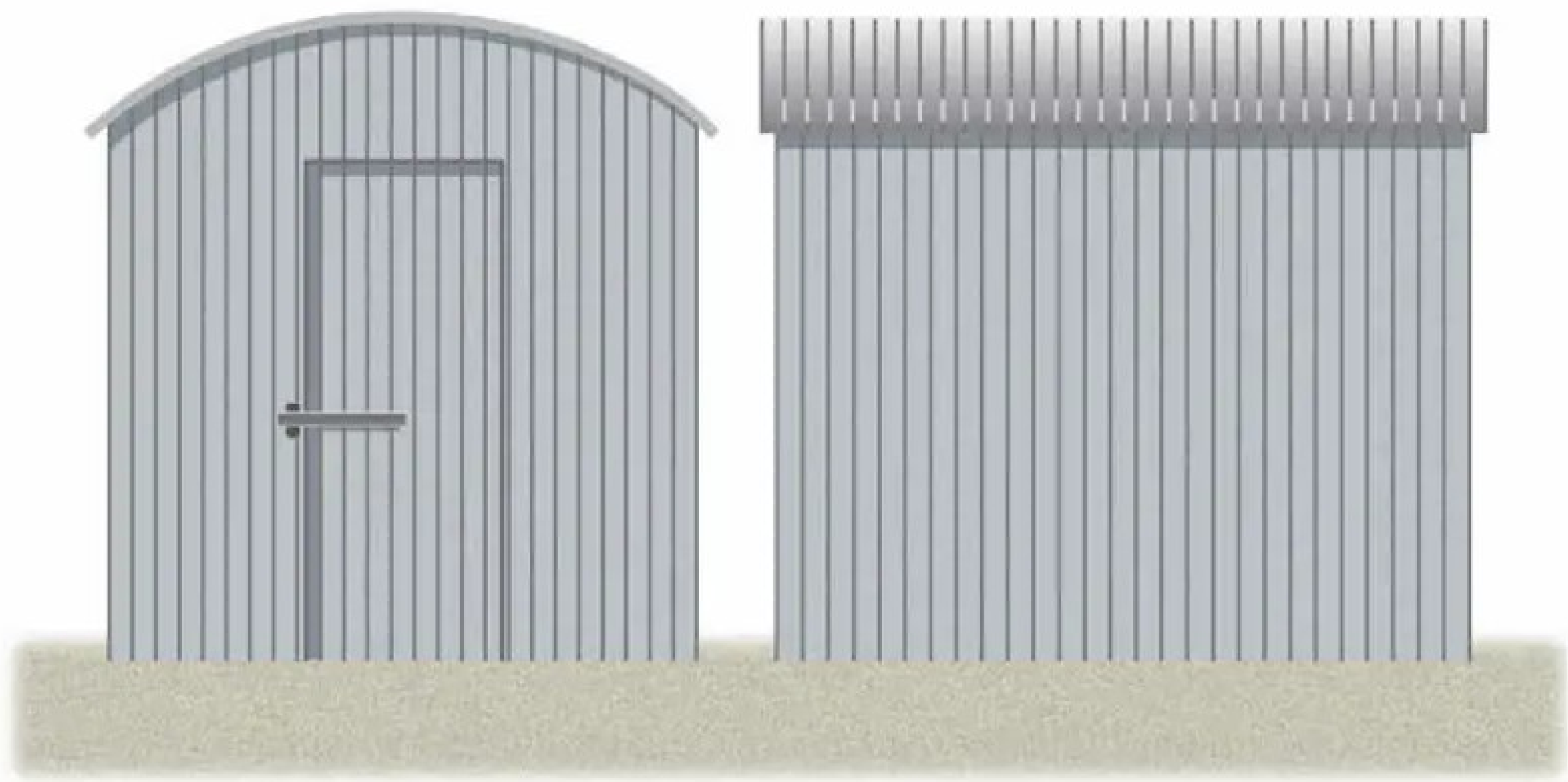
Approach to Folkestone Central station – prefabricated concrete structure with metal roof.



Wetmore sidings – timber frame with possibly asbestos panels.

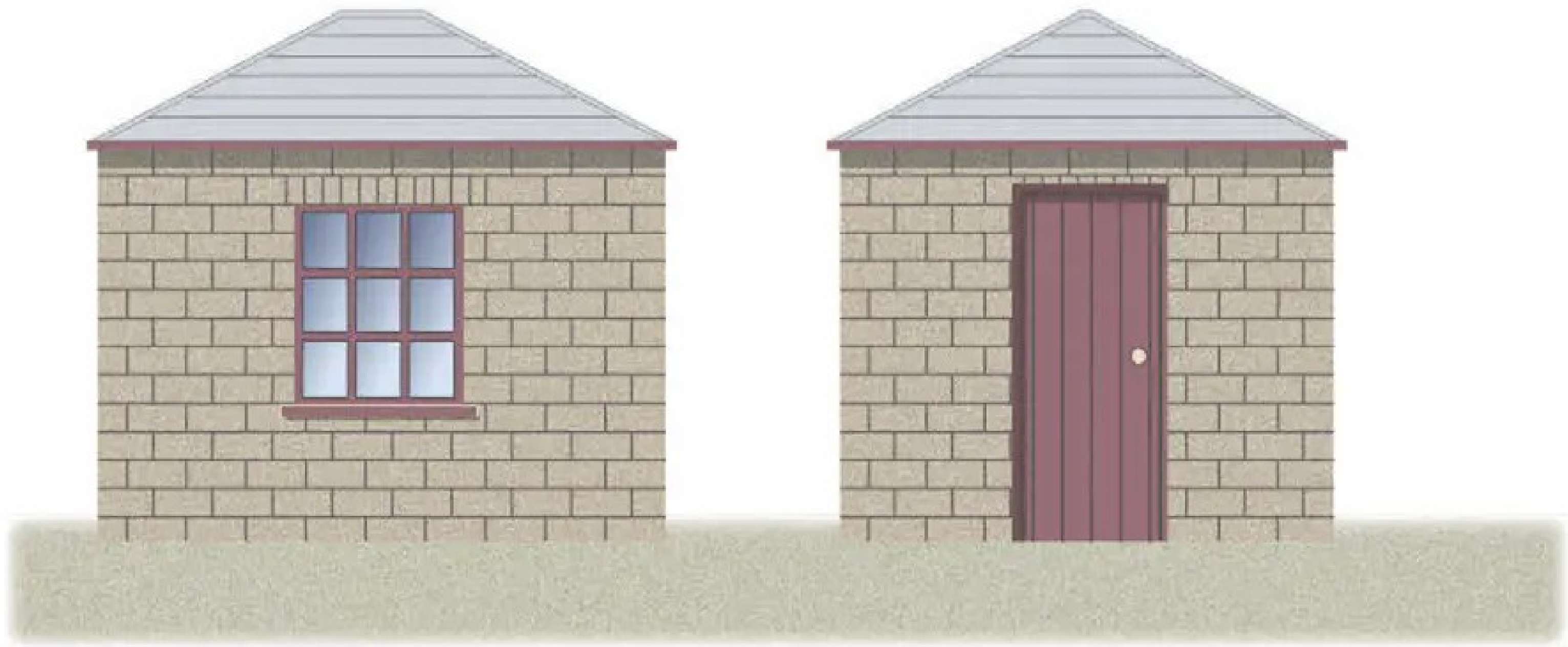


South of Tebay station – vertical timber planking walls with sloping, felted roof.

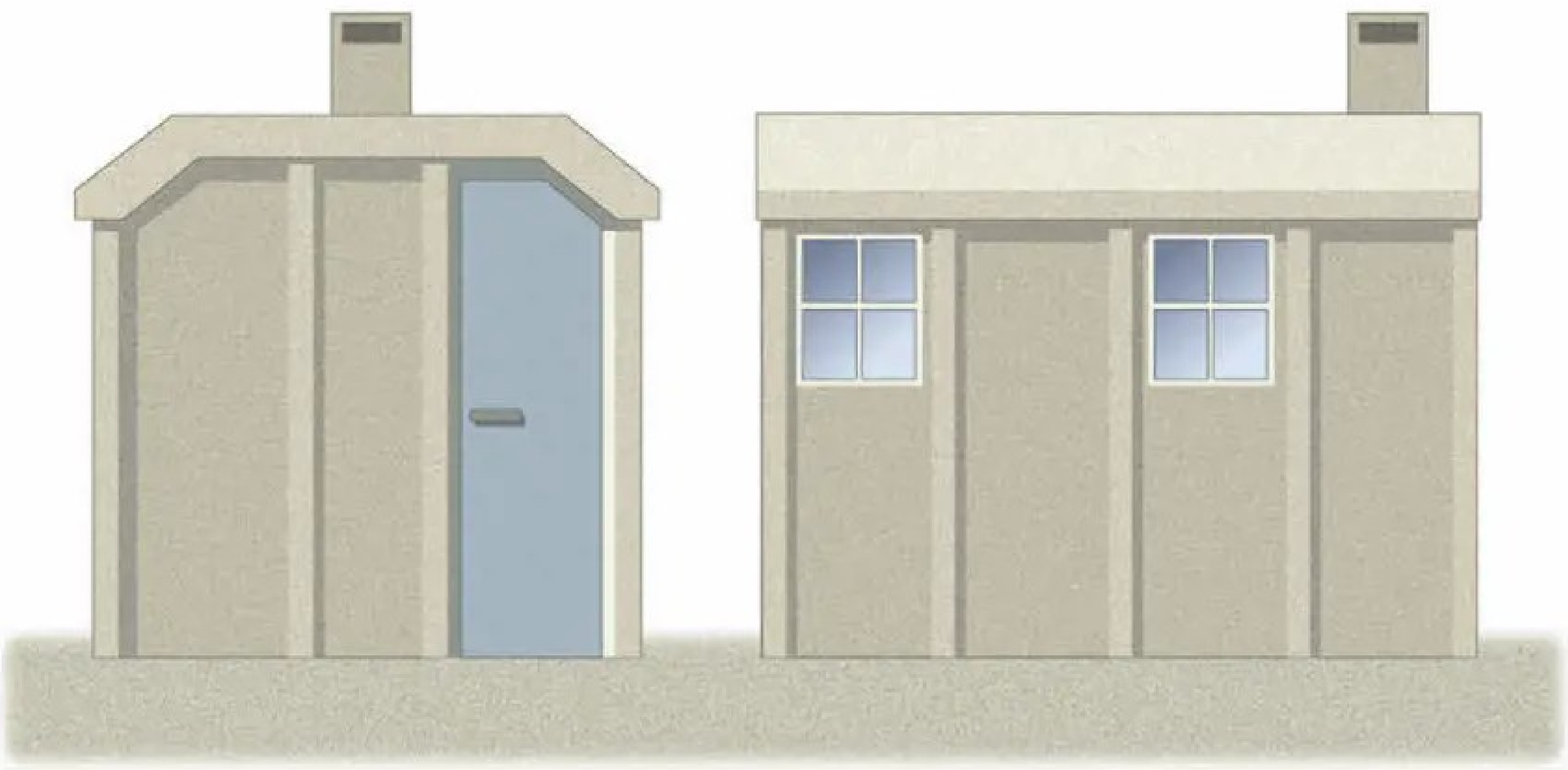


Adjacent to Dove Holes signal box – corrugated steel walls with arced roof.

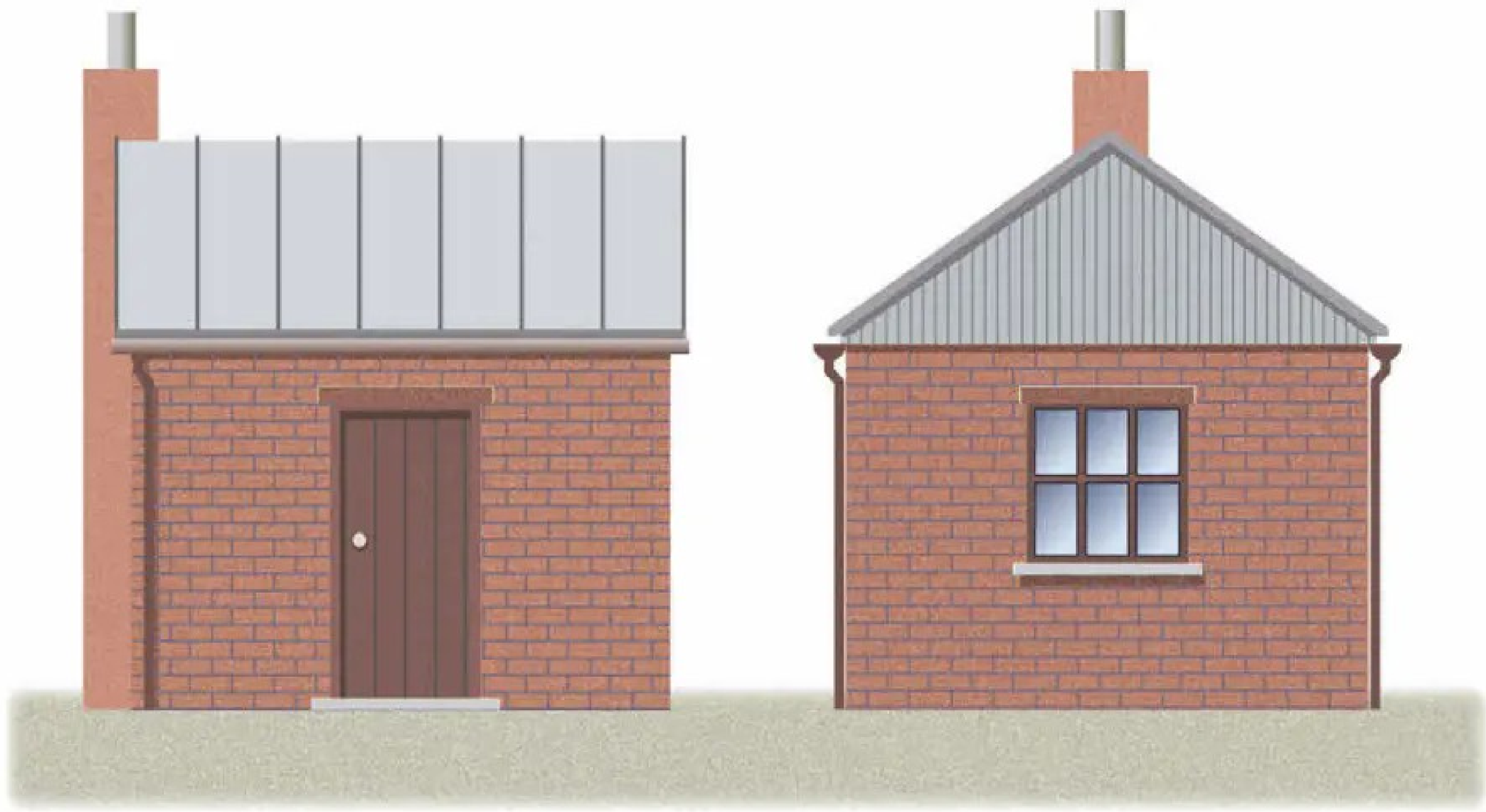
Not to scale.



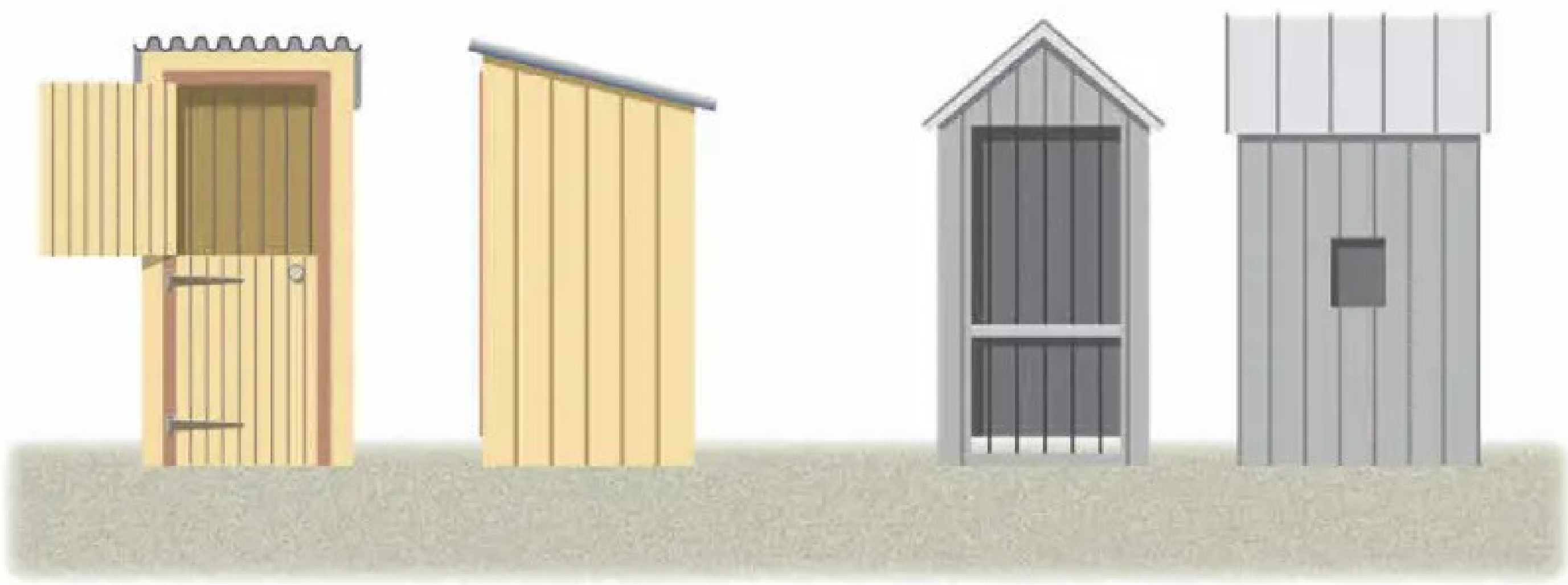
Carlton tunnel portal, Edinburgh – stone construction with felted, hipped roof.



Concrete prefabricated hut observed on numerous Southern Railway locations from circa 1946.

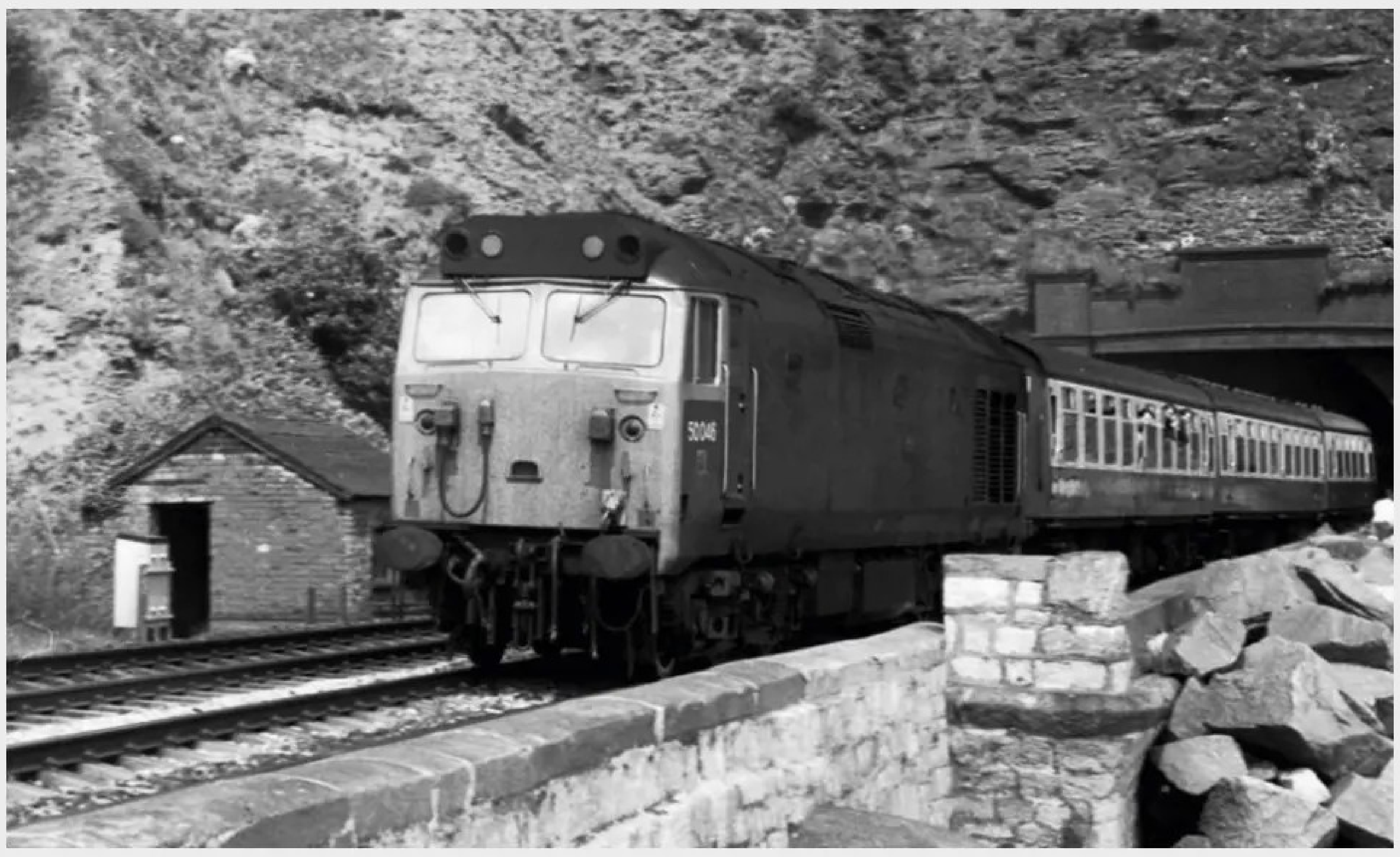


Harecastle tunnel – north portal– brick construction with timber faced gable and felted roof.

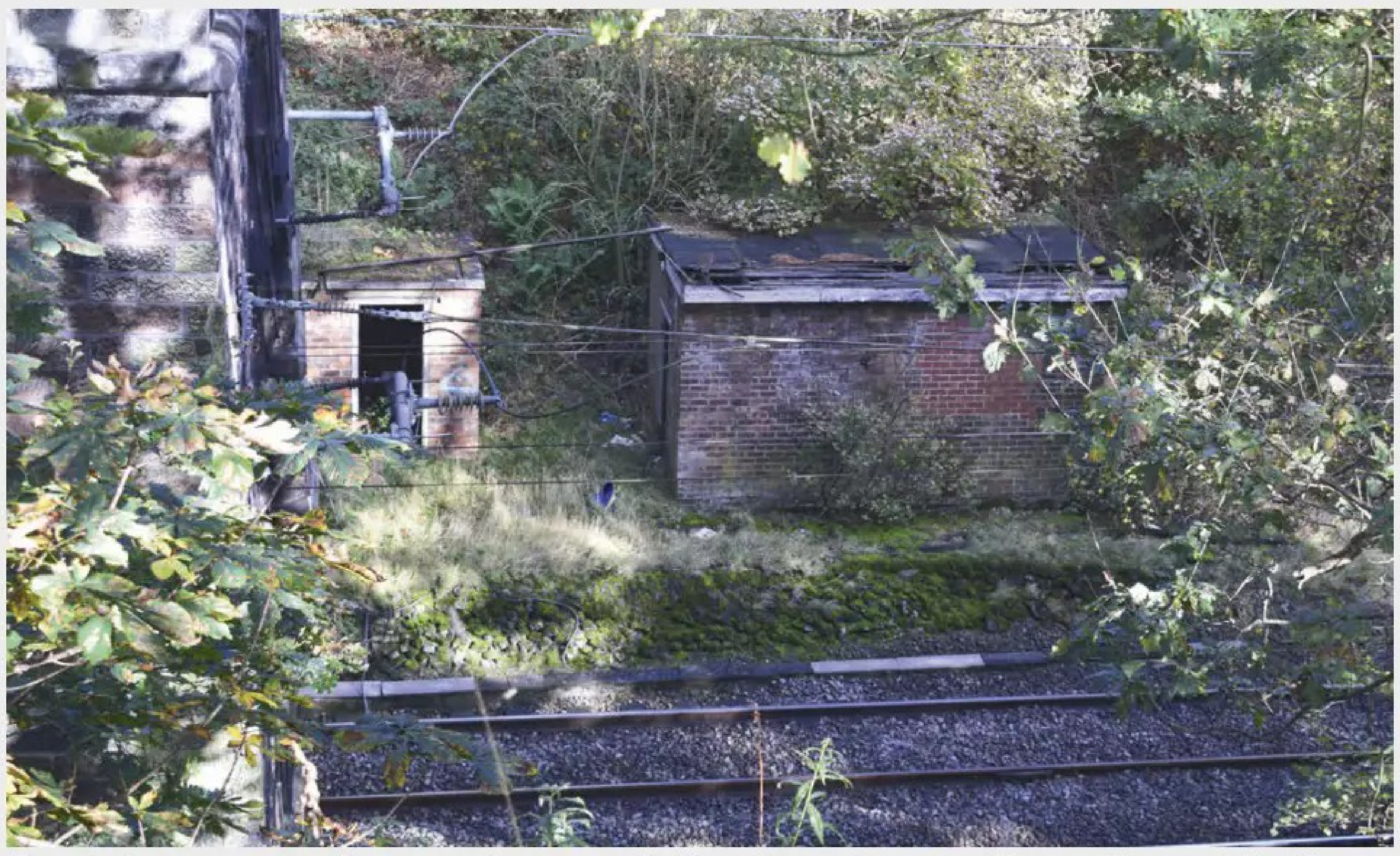


Lineman's or fogman's shelters observed at Carlisle – timber plank construction with corrugated steel or felted roofs. Note stable door – LH unit, Lookout aperture – RH unit.

Not to scale.



Although situated close to Teignmouth station on the ex-Great Western Railway south-west coastal route, it was not uncommon to spot a platelayers' hut close to a tunnel mouth, as this image of the southern portal of Parson tunnel shows. In 1982, this brick-built structure still seemed to be in use, possibly for the storage of special equipment needed for subterranean tasks.



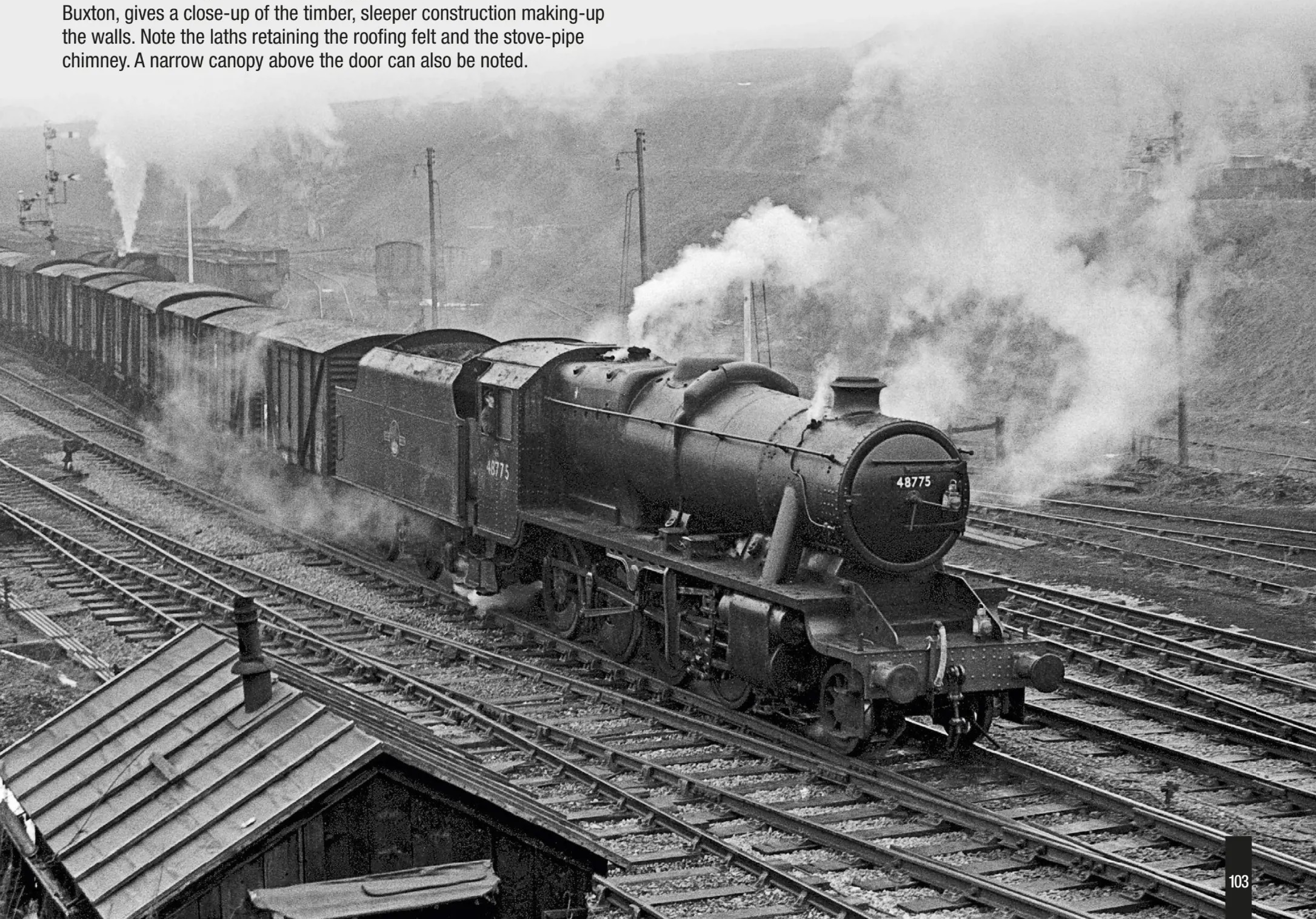
Surviving amongst excessive vegetation in a deep cutting adjacent to the eastern portal of Shugborough Tunnel in Staffordshire, on the ex-L&NWR Trent Valley line, the two buildings are in a derelict condition. Both appear to have been built at the same time in the BR era – brick construction with flat felted roof. They may have served the engineers' needs when the line was electrified during the early 1960s.

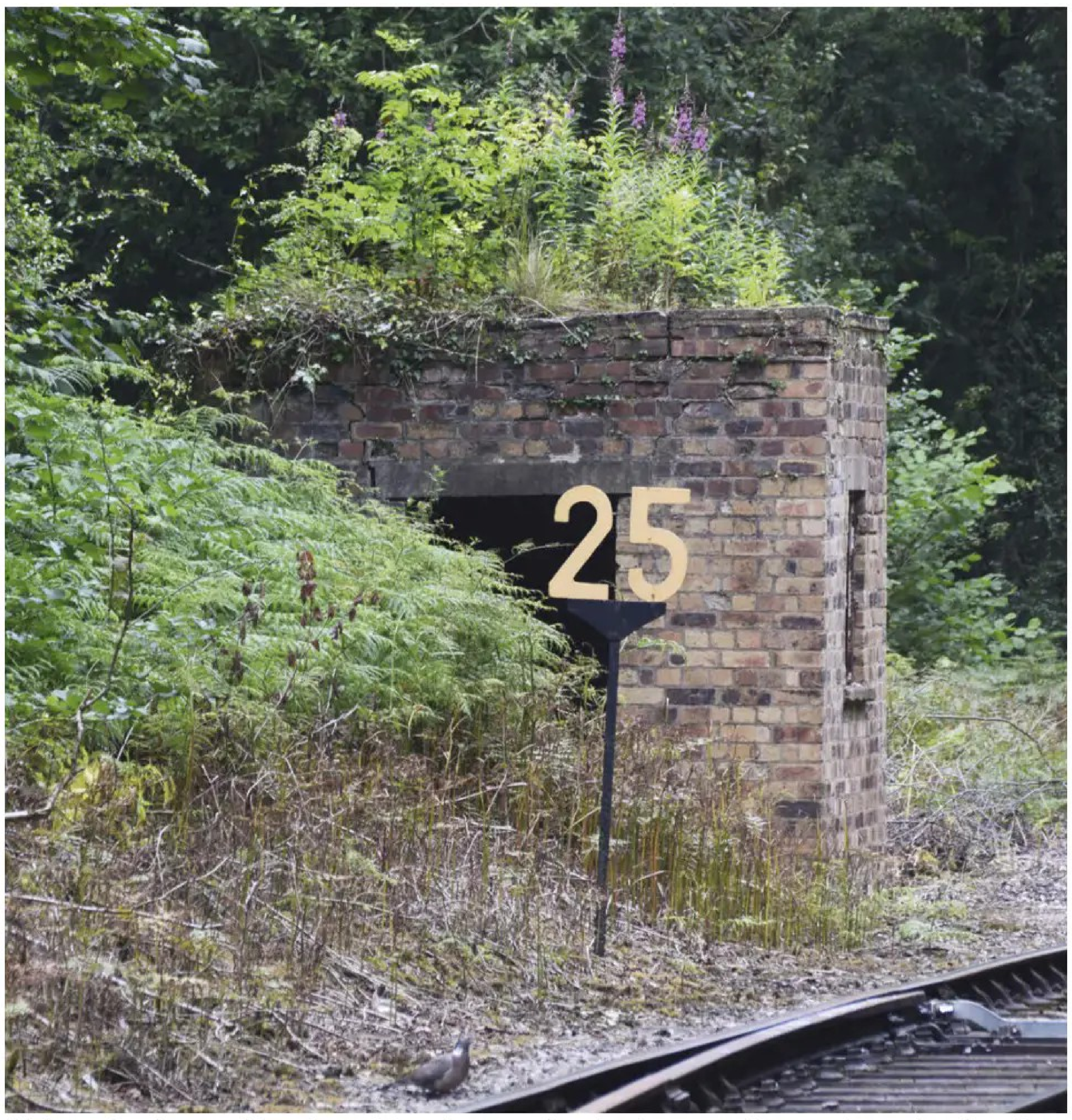
Initially, British railway track comprised bullhead rail linked to sleepers by 'chairs' and joined by 'fishplates'. Keeping the rails in line, maintaining the gauge, were wooden blocks known as 'keys' or, in later years, spring keepers that required a regular tap from the lengthman's hammer to remain in place. The moving parts of point-work and signalling equipment required lubrication; weeds and self-set trees and bushes had to be removed from cuttings and embankments, also fences and lineside structures in general were all part of the remit.

In days gone-by a rail passenger would often spot a lone person walking along the track carrying a long-handled hammer and spanner, but like the 'wheel-tapper' who also carried a long-handled hammer, the development of modern inspection equipment has rendered both jobs redundant.

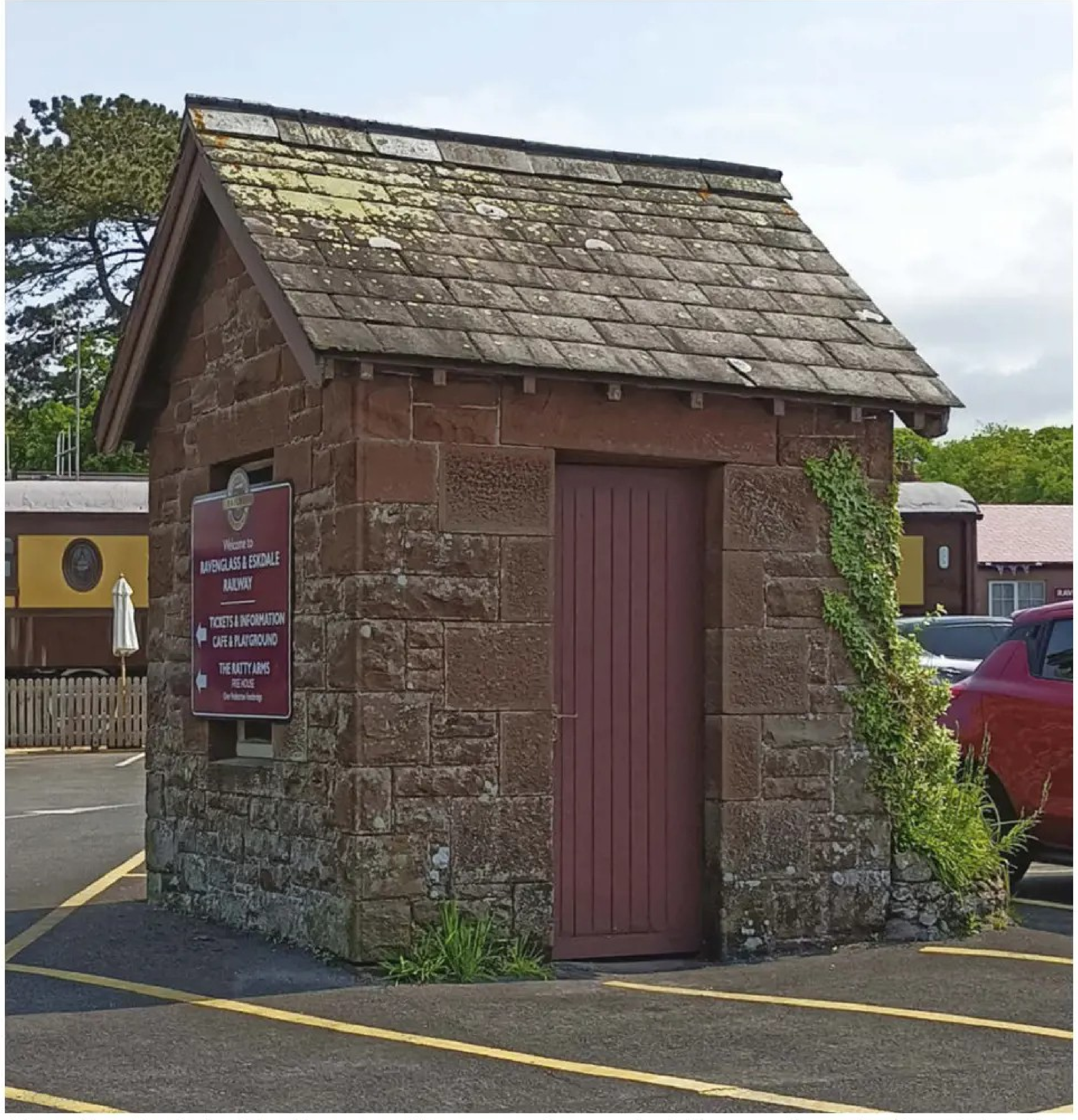
Today's Network Rail operatives arrive on site by road in yellow mobile units with all the necessary equipment and comfort needs on board, whereas the lengthman's task involved long unaccompanied walks, the platelayers' hut being the only source of comfort.

The hut in the foreground of this image, taken at Great Rocks, near Buxton, gives a close-up of the timber, sleeper construction making-up the walls. Note the laths retaining the roofing felt and the stove-pipe chimney. A narrow canopy above the door can also be noted.





Although situated by the side of an active heritage railway, there is clearly no longer a need for this example at Consul Forge. A solidly constructed brick structure with single sloping-back roof, a window faced onto the track and a wide doorway was positioned on the side wall, such that the occupant faced the on-coming traffic when venturing outside.



Standing isolated in the one-time goods yard at Ravenglass in Cumbria, the position of this stone-built Furness Railway structure in line with the road traffic entrance belies its original purpose of weighbridge office. Maintained in excellent condition by the Raveglass & Eskdale Railway, it will have been re-purposed.

I once met such a person who was recovering from an injury sustained while at work. With a trapped nerve and at least a mile from base, he had no option but to struggle some distance to find help. During the 1960s, when many lines closed and services reduced, particularly on the man's line, he really was on his own.

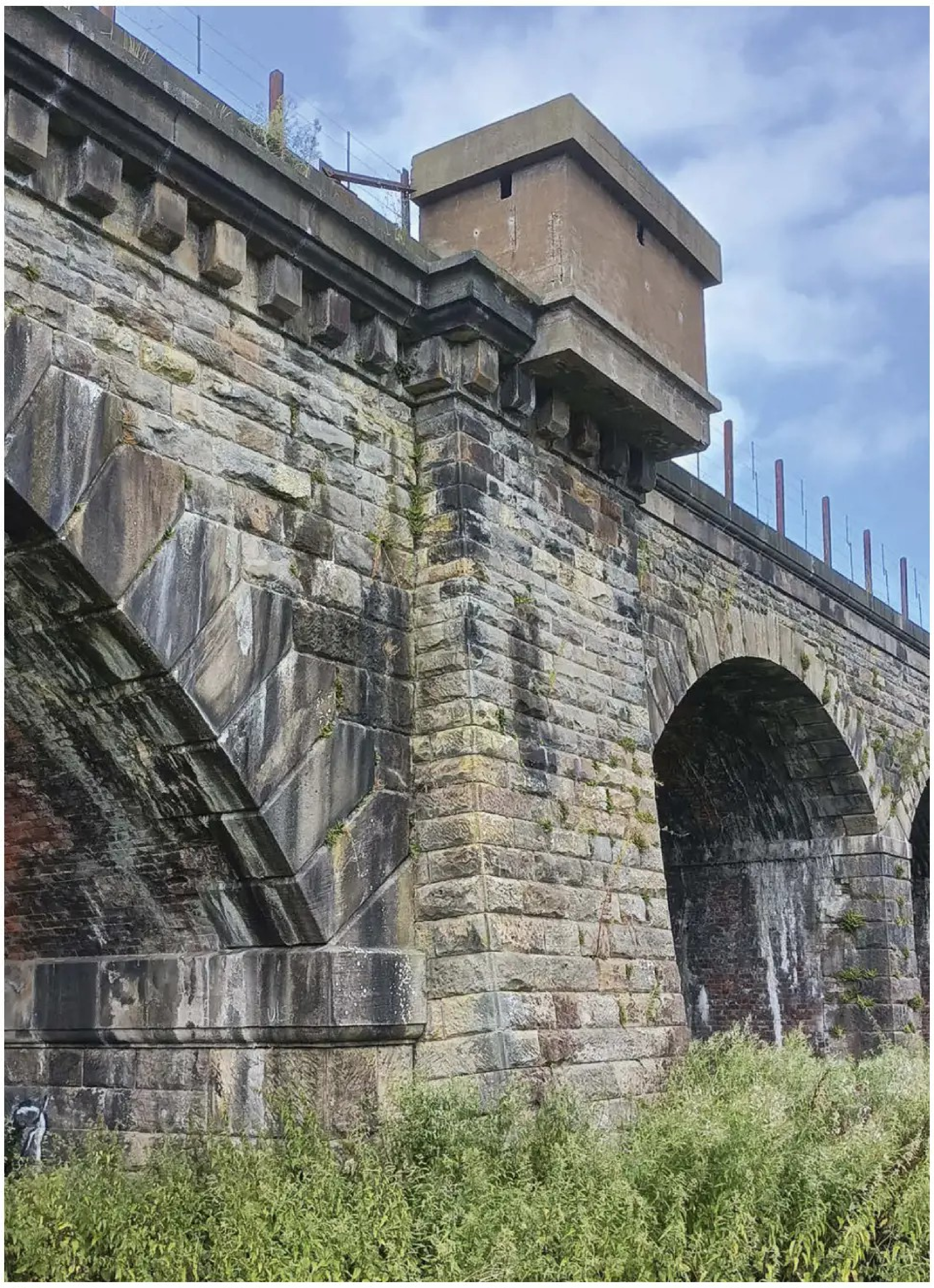
When searching through my photographic archive, it became obvious that these buildings had never been the main subject when creating a picture, but just for adding background scenery. Some do survive as ruins that appear on later shots taken on electrified lines and even on heritage railways. In the case of other railway buildings, such as signal cabins, the observer can recognise the company of origin by the architectural style, but apart from one or two examples of post-war mass production of portable structures, the heritage is not evident.

The style diagrams indicate some basic examples taken from photographic archives, therefore, the images are proportionately correct but not necessarily to scale. Materials differed from stone or brick walls to timber planks or, in later years, to concrete sections. Roofs varied among corrugated iron or asbestos and felted timber – rarely slate or tile. Not every hut had a chimney or stove-pipe.

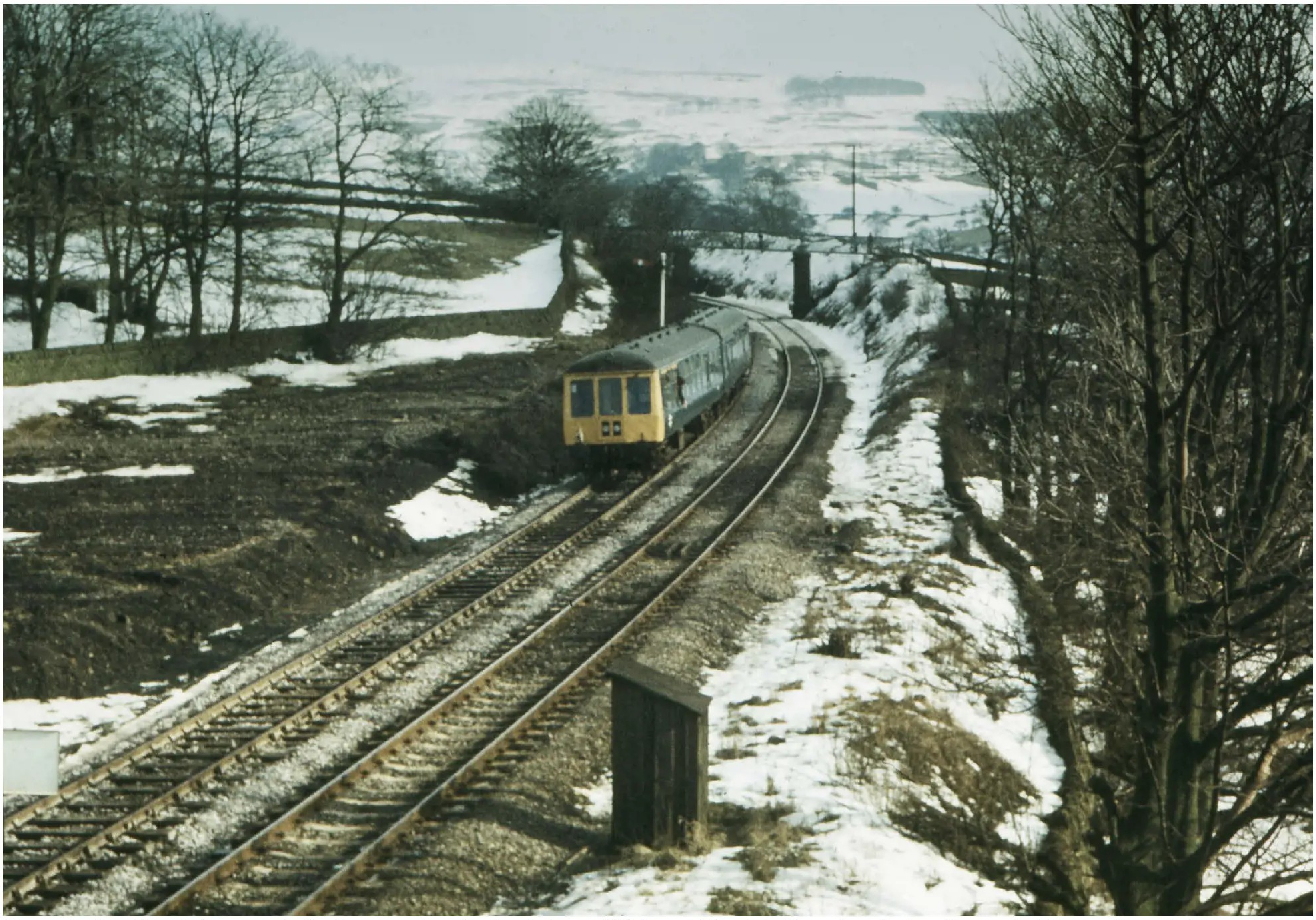
The portable shelters provided a refuge for a watchman or 'fogman' where a temporary situation occurred, such as poor visibility or permanent way repairs. When out of use, the sentry box-like structure could be laid on its side.

Small buildings with different uses

As part of British anti-invasion preparations during World War II, small fortified concrete structures, just a single room with look-out slits in the walls, were erected at all strategic locations across the country, such as railway bridges spanning navigable rivers. Known as 'pill boxes' because of their shape, the illustrated example shows one of four such buildings positioned precariously at Drakelow viaduct, where it crosses the River Trent.

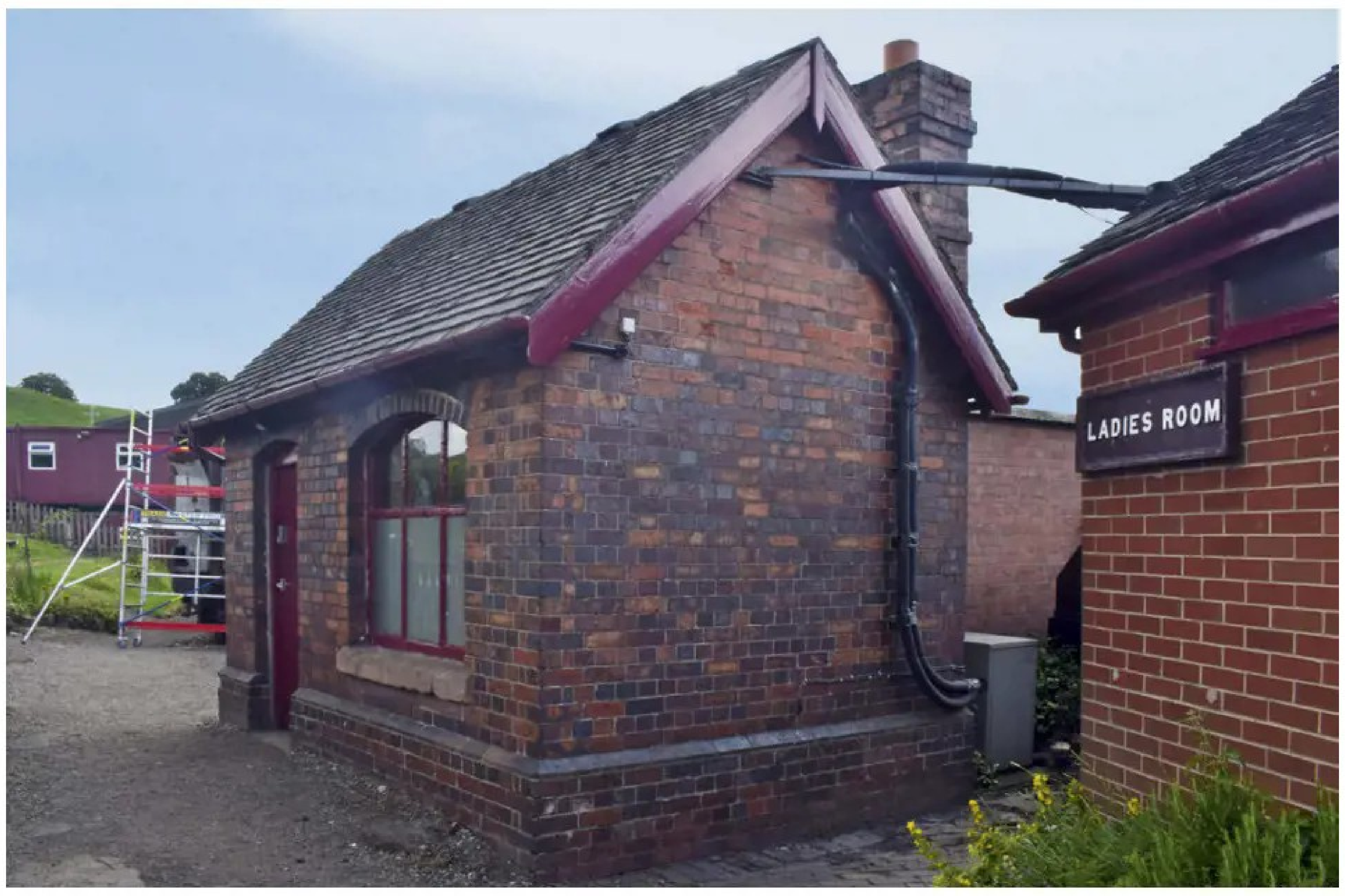


This rather ugly 'pill box' perched atop this majestic ex-Midland Railway viaduct serves as a reminder of troubled times when Britain faced the threat of invasion.



The sentry box-like shelter, seen in the foreground on the line between Chinley and Cowburn Tunnel, protects a 'fogman' while carrying out duties, placing detonators on the track to warn a driver when approaching a junction at times of poor visibility. It was not uncommon to observe such a person standing by the open front of the hut, behind a red-hot brazier in winter conditions, similar to those that this image portrays. When not in use, the hut would be lain down on the ground.

With the appearance of a sentry box, 'fogman's' huts could be observed at the approaches to junctions or other areas requiring extra care. In the days of steam and smoky chimneys, fog and mist created a hazard to all travellers. The fogman's job involved strapping a coin-shaped detonator on the track that would emit an audible sound as a locomotive ran over it to warn the driver of impending poor visibility. Such devices were often stored at signal boxes or platelayers' huts.



Built in 1849, Cheddleton station on the heritage Churnet Valley Railway is reputed to have been designed by Pugin, but it is unlikely that the great architect had influence over the design of this weighbridge office that now serves as crew signing-on post.

During the 1950s, when my modelling days began, the Airfix kit arrived in a plastic bag for two shillings, 10p in modern money. The company developed an extensive range that included railway buildings, one such kit containing all the plastic parts to build, not just a platelayers' hut but a 'coal office' as well. These products are still available from Dapol.

Resembling timber construction, the coal office model has the right proportions to double as a weighbridge office. Examples of this type of building featured in this article, and frequently found in goods yards, are constructed from brick or stone and some feature a large window in the wall adjacent to the actual weighbridge outside. The scales themselves are within the buildings.

Conclusion

Platelayers' huts, pill boxes, signing-on posts, or weighbridge offices have throughout railway history played a Cinderella but vital part in operating the network. The lengthman, fogman and wheel tapper went about their tasks often unnoticed by the travelling public, but they played a crucial role in old-time 'Health & Safety'. It only seems fair that they should receive some comfort from a strong, sweet brew in their own little hut by the side of the line.

Most of the images in this article do not feature a platelayers' hut as the central subject, they just happen to be somewhere to the side. If removed, the scene would not be complete. ■

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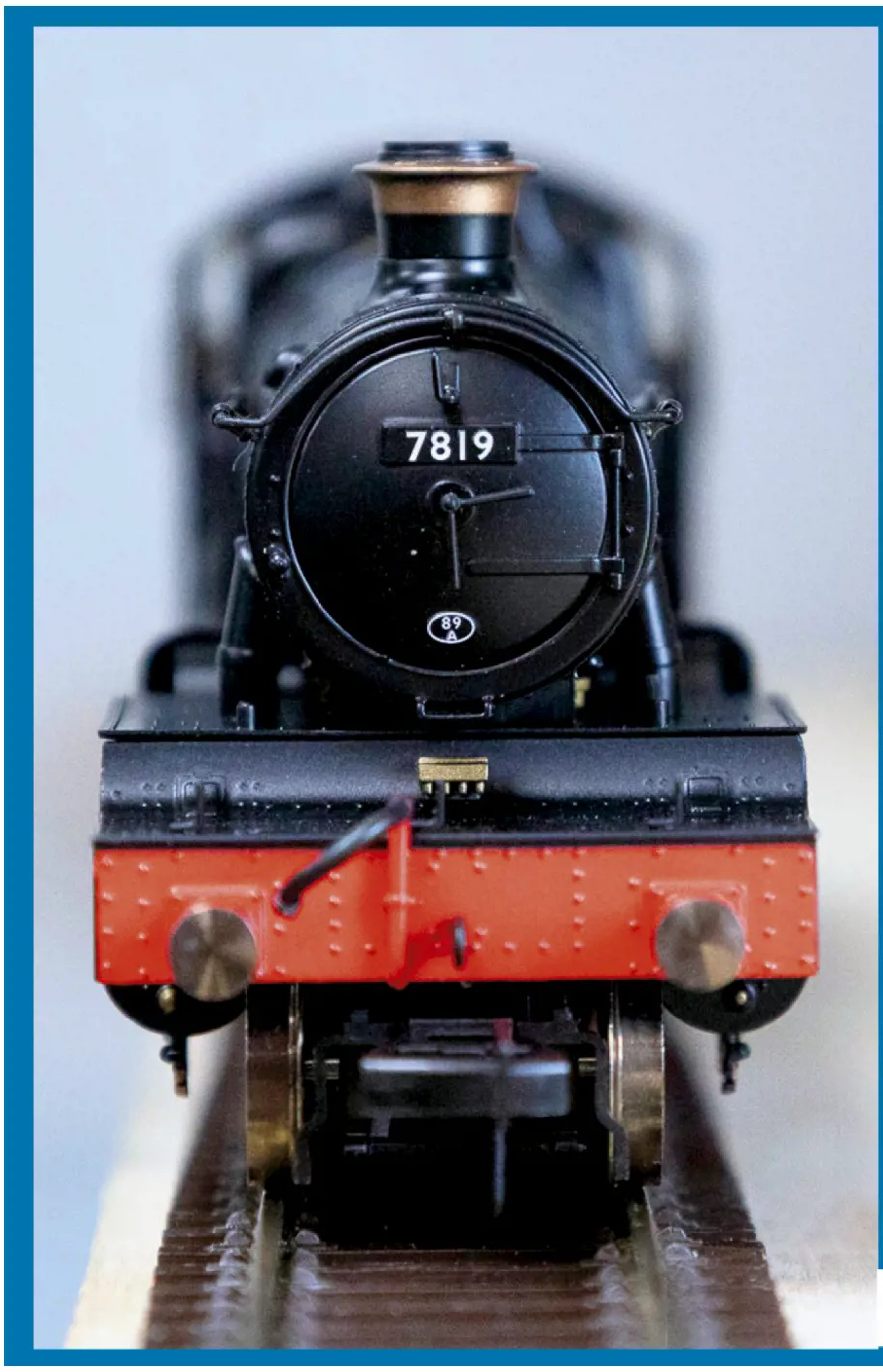

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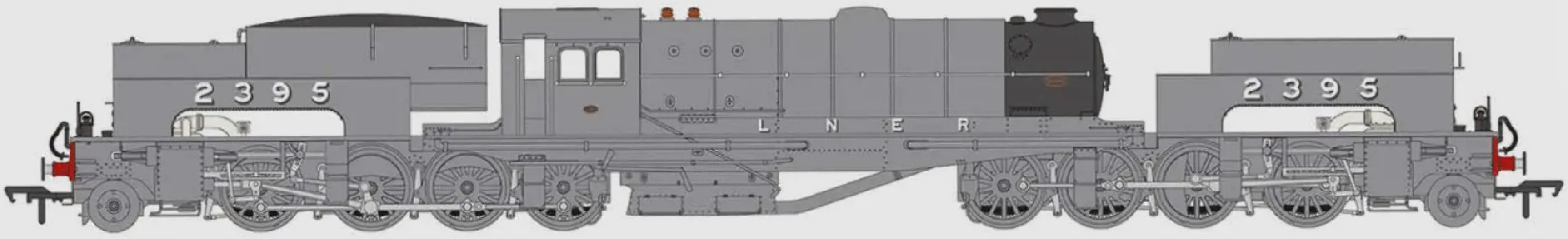

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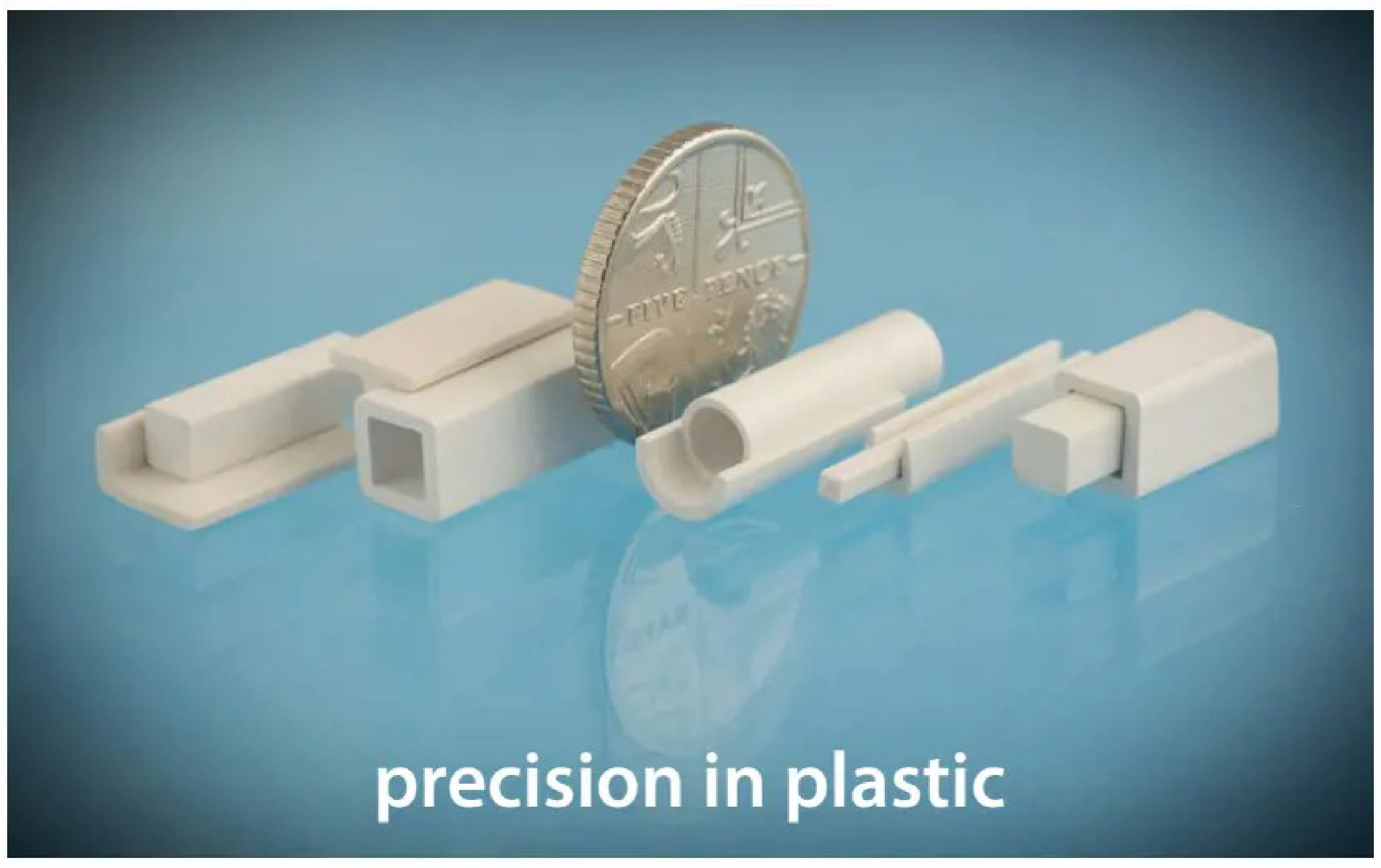

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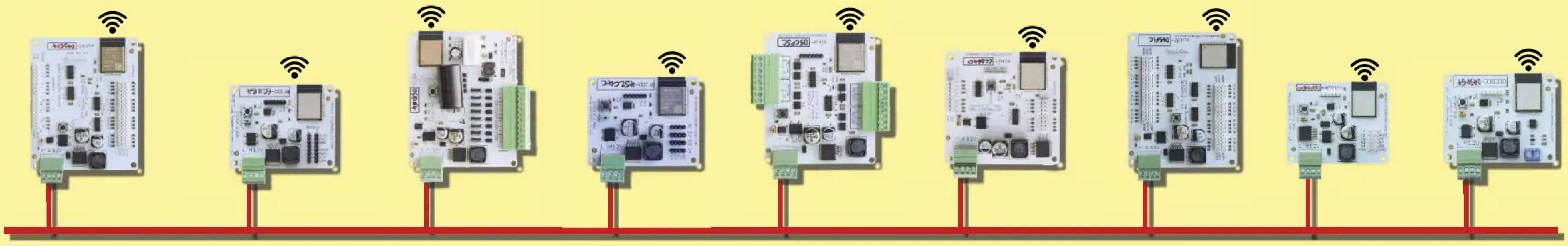

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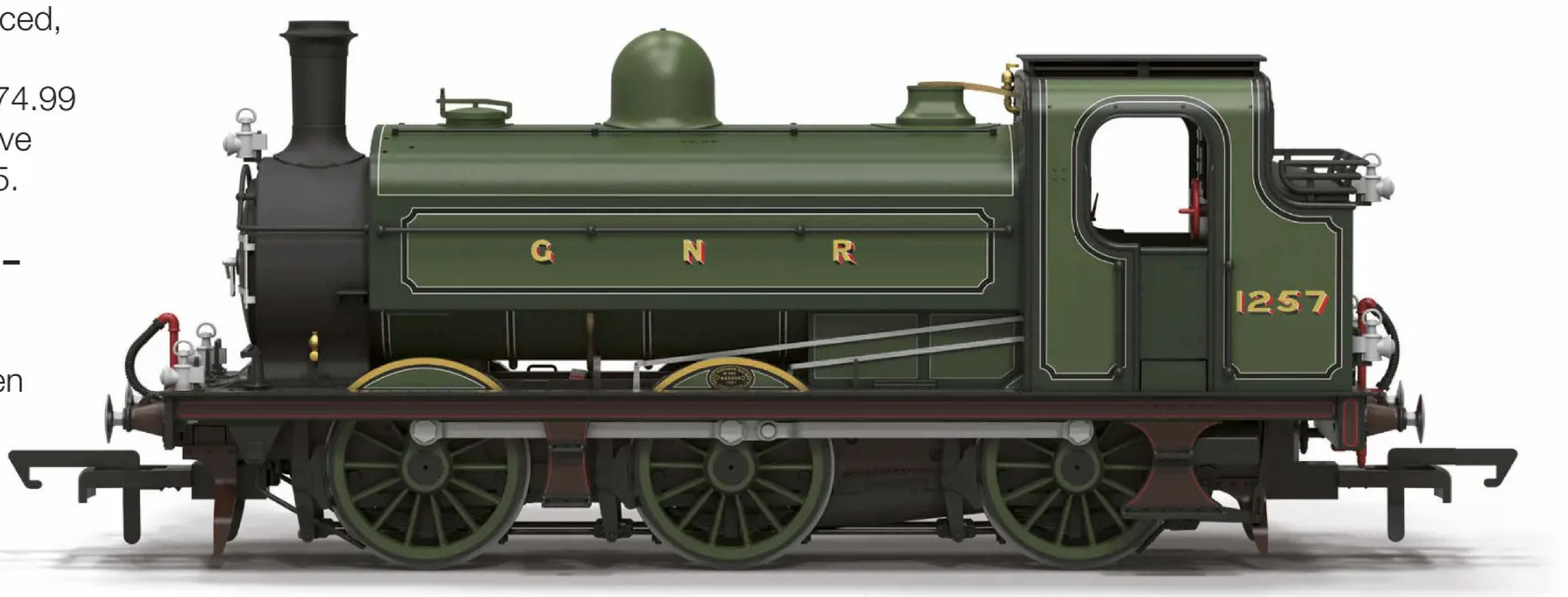
THE LATEST HEADLINES

Hornby reveals two new OO locomotives

The Margate manufacturer has revealed new Class 60 and J50/13 locomotives will join the range next year.

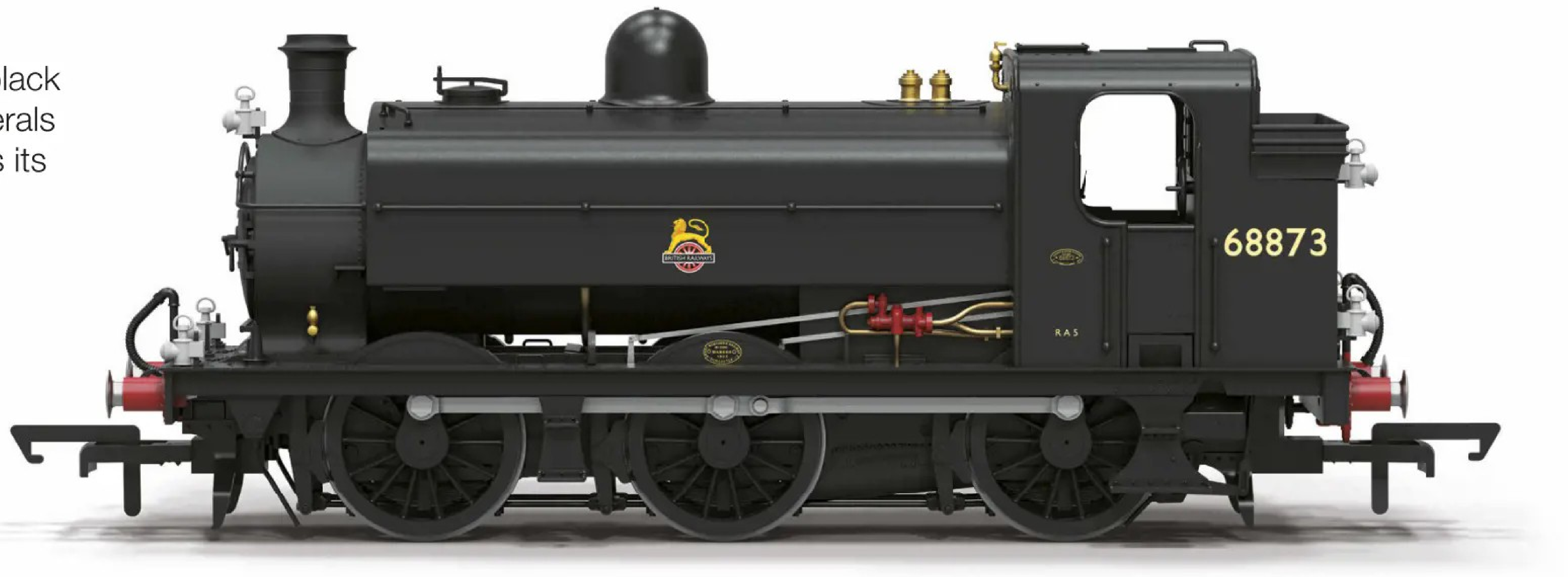
New J50/13
Three liveries are currently announced, all with distinct design changes to reflect the prototype. Priced at £174.99 each, all three are expected to arrive on different dates throughout 2025.

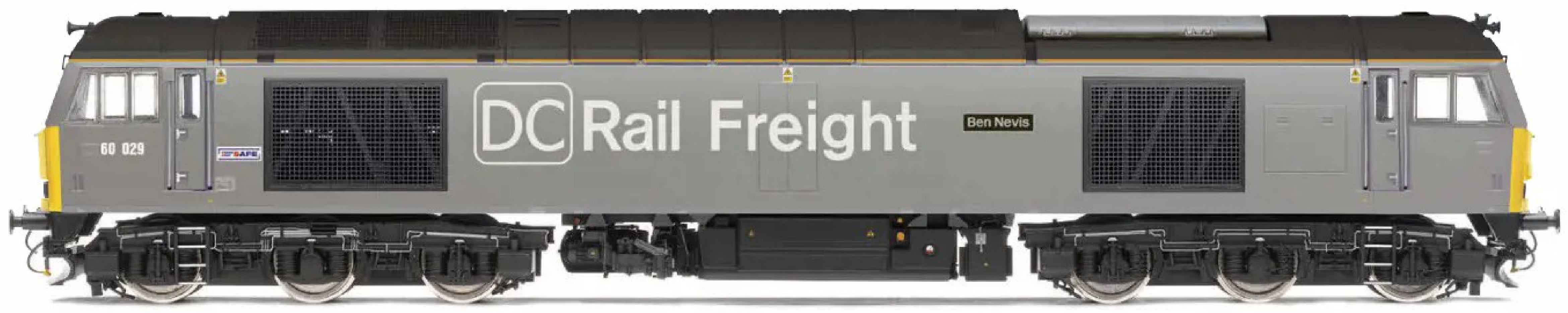
R30365 GNR J13 0-6-0ST 1257 – expected July 2025
The model is presented in original Great Northern Railway apple green with black and white lining and red-shaded gold lettering and numerals. It also has the earlier-style safety valve cowling.

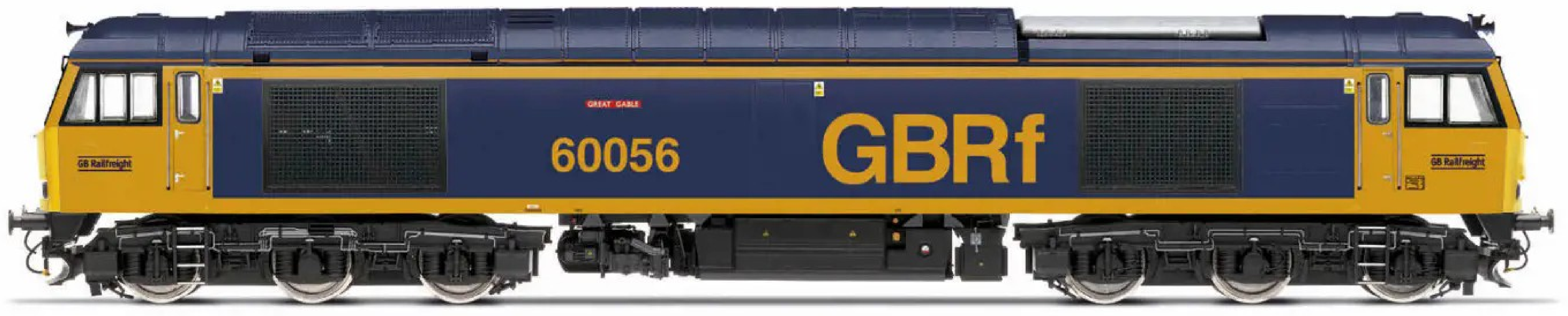


R30367 LNER J52 0-6-0ST 4225 – expected June 2025
The LNER's standard goods and shunting locomotive livery of plain black with red-shaded lettering and numerals decorate the model, which also has its builder's plate on the bunker sides.

R30366 BR J52 0-6-0ST 68873 – expected December 2025
The model is finished in plain black with BR early 'cycling lion' crest as applied in the 1950s, with the five-digit number on the increased-capacity bunker sides. The locomotive also has the later-type safety valves and steam injectors.







New Class 60
Four versions of the new locomotive have been announced and are expected to arrive in March next year. Two of the liveries are priced at £294.99 and come sound-fitted, while the other two are available for £249.99 in DCC-Ready format.

Available liveries

- Loadhaul Class 60 Co-Co 60008 *Gypsum Queen II* - Sound-Fitted - Era 9
- GB Railfreight Class 60 Co-Co 60056 *Great Gable* - Sound-Fitted - Era 11
- The OneOne Collection Class 60 Co-Co 60081 *Isambard Kingdom Brunel* - Era 11
- DR Rail Class 60 Co-co 60029 *Ben Nevis* - Era 11

Accurascale announce New Class 37/9

Accurascale has announced the Mirrlees engine variant Class 37/9 as its latest locomotive release in OO.

The first release of the Accurascale Class 37/9 covers three of the Mirrlees examples over the full life of the sub class, from original conversion, through their classic late sectorisation period right through to the present day.

Each of the three versions is unique with different silencer configurations and nose side grilles depending on the period, and they also feature the whole host of upgrades afforded to the other models in the third run, which includes a working roof fan on both DCC-ready and DCC sound versions, switchable tail lights (right on, left on, both on), revised bonnet top doors, see-through radiator shutters with radiators behind, and engine room detail visible through the windows.

A comprehensive new sound project has also been recorded, with assistance from Europhoenix and UK Rail Leasing.

Both BR versions will be available direct and through Accurascale's network of stockists, while 37901 in Europhoenix livery will be an 'Accurascale Exclusive' coming with special presentation packaging, a limited-edition certificate and available only directly via the Accurascale website.

Available to pre-order now, DC/DCC-Ready locomotives are priced at £189.99 and the DCC Sound-Fitted locomotives are priced at £289.99. Delivery is expected in winter 2025.

New O gauge Fruit Vans revealed

Available to pre-order at your preferred Dapol stockist now, the new wagons will be released in January 2025.

Featuring an accurately moulded body, a self-compensating chassis for smooth trouble-free running, metal sprung buffers and finely-profiled wheels and axles with brass bearing pockets, the new fruit vans are available in both pristine and weathered versions in limited numbers.

Available models

- 7F-067-003 Great Western Fruit Van Jaffa - £55.51
- 7F-067-003W Great Western Fruit Van Jaffa Weathered - £57.57
- 7F-067-004 Great Western Fruit Van Del Monte - £55.51
- 7F-067-004W Great Western Fruit Van Del Monte Weathered - £57.57

New GER 5-Plank and 7-Plank all-purpose General Merchandise Open wagons

Rapido Trains will be expanding its range of Great Eastern models with the brand-new OO GER 5-Plank and 7-Plank all-purpose General Merchandise Open Wagons.

The new Great Eastern Railway wagons will feature body tooling variants to cover Dia.17 5-Plank, Dia.48 7-Plank, and Dia.48 7-plank conversion variants.

They offer full external, internal and underframe detail, including different brakes, door types, builder's plate styles, buffers, axle boxes, safety loops, and brake lever guards. All models feature Great Eastern-style 8-spoke wheels with distinctive retaining rings and are finished off with brass bearings, NEM coupling pockets and livery application.

Priced at £32.95, Engineering Prototypes have already been received and you can order yours directly from **www.rapidotrains.co.uk** today or from any of its official retailers.

New row of shops from Scalescenes

An all-new design that captures the character and proportions of a typical small row of town shops has been launched by Scalescenes.

Available in OO and N, the new downloadable kit features detailed shop backs and yards, a choice of billboards, shop signs and interior details to suit all eras, pre-shaped plywood sheets for boarded-up shopfronts and optional exhaust ducting.

Interior details include paintings, rugs, curtains and blinds, plus a selection of different roof tiles are available, including red brick, London brick and brown brick.

Priced at £7.99, the new downloadable kits are available to order now, directly from **scalescenes.com.**

Accurascale reveals plans for new Hunslet Austerity

Accurascale has announced its next 00 steam locomotive project; the Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0 saddle tank locomotives.

The Accurascale Austerity takes the spirit of the real locomotive and is designed to move heavy trains with the minimum of fuss thanks to an all-up weight of nearly 250g and a powerful coreless motor.

Accurascale has the capability of covering most modifications since the introduction of the type, from the LNER modifications to the bunkers and tank steps, the NCB and Hunslet draughting changes, the cut-down cabs of the NCB locomotives working on the Philadelphia system in County Durham and even preservation era modifications.

A total of six locomotives will make up the main range for the first production cycle, with an 'Accurascale Exclusive' model to follow later.

Initial models

- ACC3099 Austerity - United Steel company - WGB2762 - 18
- ACC3100 Austerity - BR Early Emblem - HC1775 - 68025
- ACC3101 Austerity - LNER - HE3151 - 8008
- ACC3106 Austerity - NCB South Wales - HE3810 - *Glendower*
- ACC3107 Austerity - NCB North East - VF5300 - 59
- ACC3108 Austerity - NCB North West - HE3823 - *Warrior*

Available to pre-order now, the price for the DC/DCC models is £149.95 and £249.95 for the DCC sound-fitted versions.

Esso B Class Tank Wagons from IRM

Irish Railway Models has teamed up with Heljan to release a run of the former BR Oil tankers bought by CIE in the late-1960s and modified for Irish operations.

Synonymous on the "Sligo Oil" trains, these B Class tank wagons were modified with additional bracing between the tank barrel and chassis, which have been tooled up to make these authentic for the Irish variants of these distinct wagons.

Operating in block trains until 2003, and as part of the Sligo liner for a couple more years, the Sligo oil train operated from North Wall to Sligo at a steady pace of just 35 miles per hour.

Using photos and other historical data, IRM has developed a block train formation of these characterful wagons, so you can replicate these iconic workings that were very much an everyday scene of Irish railfreight for many, many years.

Coming in three packs of four wagons, there are 12 differently numbered tankers available in this strictly limited, one-off run.

Each pack is priced at €169.99 per four wagons with 10% off when you buy two or more. As these are commissions from Heljan, they are only available directly via the IRM and Accurascale websites.

Available to pre-order now, the tank wagons are now manufactured and will be in stock early in the new year.

ZZA Beilhack Snow Ploughs join the Accurascale range

Accurascale has announced the addition of the Hattons Originals ZZA Beilhack Snow Ploughs to its range and an all-new production run of four twin packs covering different eras.

The ZZA snow ploughs feature a large amount of diecast construction, along with some separately-applied and etched metal parts.

Each twin pack is priced at £69.95 and are available as exclusives direct only from the Accurascale website. Delivery is slated for Q4 2025 and production numbers are strictly limited.

New Goods Transfer Shed from Severn Models

Available in N gauge, this new brass etch kit is available to order now.

Featuring a rail platform on one side and a vehicle loading platform on the other with access steps, the new kit from Severn Models is supplied as a flat-packed brass etch kit, requiring assembly and painting.

Sliding style doors can be fixed in place either open or closed, as required, and the overall footprint size of the building is 48x42mm.

Priced at £19, assembly can be by glue or solder.

KMRC announces exclusive T3 4-4-0 steam locomotives

Kernow Model Rail Centre has announced exclusive 00 Sound-Fitted versions of the EFE Rail Adams T3 4-4-0 steam locomotives.

During its quarterly Bachmann Winter 2024 British Railway Announcements, the versions being initially produced have been revealed.

Sound-fitted versions will be exclusively available from Kernow Model Rail Centre, which includes a Zimo sound decoder with stay alives fitted, sounds recorded on No. 563 and produced for KMRC by YooChoos.

The five exclusive Sound-Fitted EFE Rail Adams T3 4-4-0 locomotives, priced at £289.99, are available to pre-order now, online or at both Kernow Model Rail Centre branches.

- E85019SF Adams T3 Class 4-4-0 LSWR Adams Pea Green Livery number 561
- E85023SF Adams T3 Class 4-4-0 LSWR Urie Green Livery lettered LSWC the final iteration of LSWR green number 564
- E85024SF Adams T3 Class SR Lined Olive Green livery number 560
- E85025SF Adams T3 Class SR Lined Olive Green livery - Drummond Boiler number 558
- E85030SF Adams T3 Class 4-4-0 LSWR Livery (as preserved) - LSWR Drummond Green Livery number 563

Dapol Class 142 deco samples arrive

Dapol has received the first rendition of its N gauge Class 142 decorated samples and has shared some images.

The design team is currently reviewing them and formulating feedback to the factory to correct any issues.

Featuring a powered and a dummy car in each set, the new Class 142 features detailed bodies with flush glazing, a close coupling mechanism with corridor connector Scharfenberg coupling mechanism fitted as standard, all-wheel drive and pick up on power unit, directional lights on both cars with independently controllable internal (where fitted) and external lighting, plus an accessory bag with optional fitted components.

Proposed Liveries

- Class 142 Northern Rail 142024
- Class 142 Provincial 142058
- Class 142 Regional Railways Red/Grey/White 142038
- Class 142 First Great Western Blue/Gold 142070
- Class 142 Regional Railways Original 142084

Priced at £162.00 DCC Ready and £205.20 DCC-Fitted, the new models are expected to be in shops sometime during Q2 2024.

Dapol reveals two new OO wagon releases

Both wagons feature highly-detailed body moulding and NEM pockets with self-centring couplings.

Available to pre-order now, these wagons are currently in production and will be released in January 2025.

Available models

4F-015-023 Fruit Mex Del Monte No.1 - £12.45
4F-015-024 Fruit Mex Del Monte No.1 Weathered - £13.65
4F-012-063 Ventilated Van Birds Eye No.1 - £13.00
4F-012-064 Ventilated Van Birds Eye No.1 Weathered - £14.20

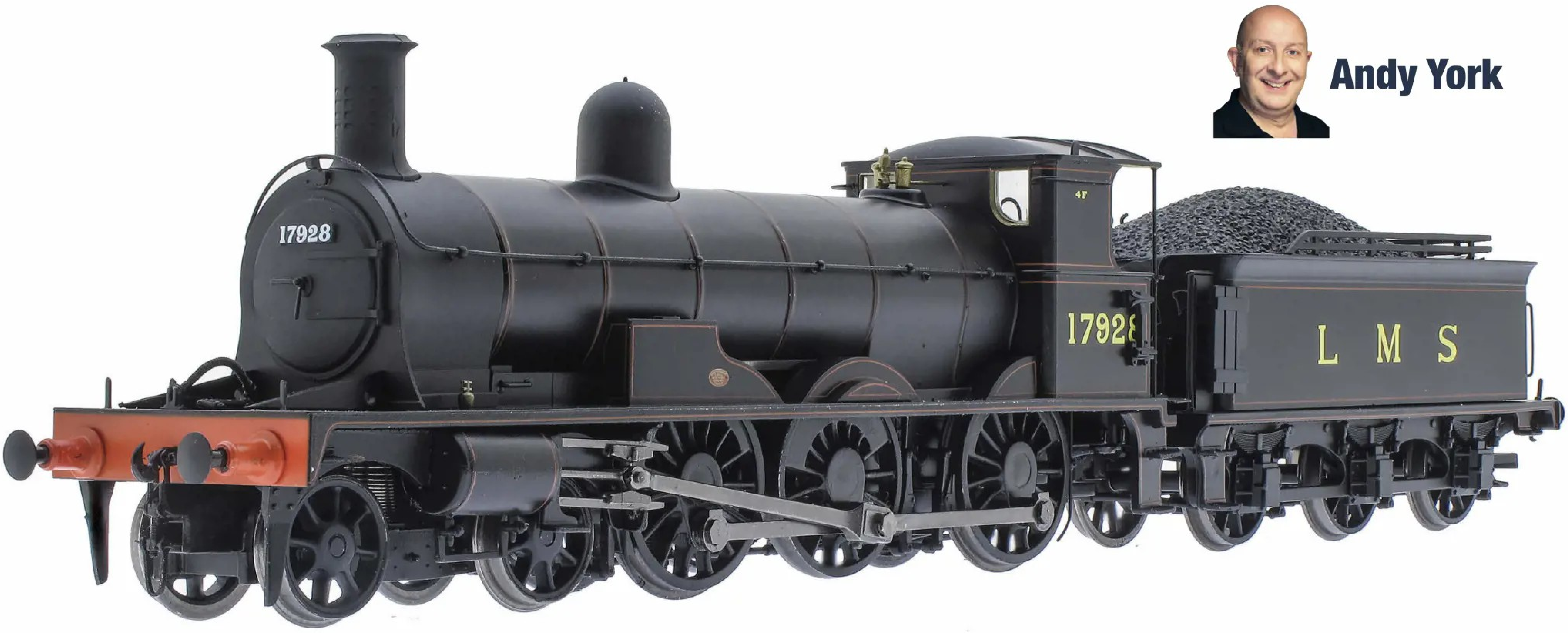
New Ratio Railway Wagon Weighbridge kit

This new kit joins the OO/HO range of Ratio Trackside Series of kits and is available to order direct from Peco.

The plastic moulded kit comes with laser-cut wooden parts and includes a short straight piece of Peco Setrack (ST202) to help modellers complete the scene.

555 Railway Wagon Weighbridge is priced at £11.95 and is supplied with pre-coloured parts, although painting and/or weathering is recommended. The overall footprint of the new kit is 90mm x 83mm.

Rapido Highland Railway Jones 'Big Goods'



Andy York

While commonplace on American railroads, the 4-6-0 wheel arrangement was a comparatively late arrival to Britain's railways, with the Highland Railway's Chief Engineer David Jones being the first with Sharp Stewart's build, giving a successful prototype that most railways subsequently followed.

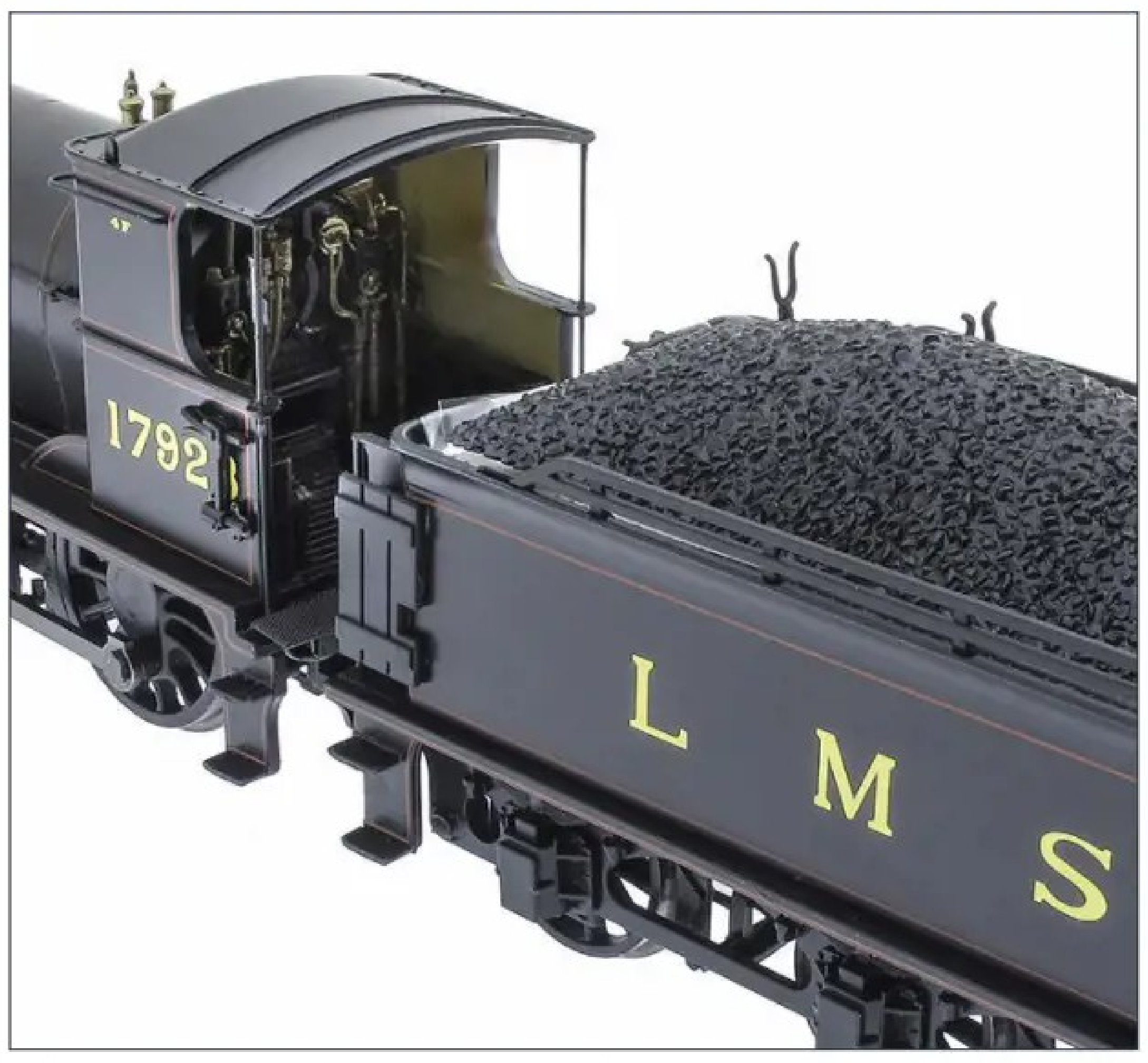
The class of 15 was initially referred to as 'Big Goods', becoming Class I under Drummond's classifications. The class lasted through to the Second World War in LMS guise, with the last example withdrawn in 1940. Members were put to work between Perth and Inverness and became an instant success. As the Highland expanded and modified its network, the locomotives began to run north of Inverness and out to Kyle of Lochalsh, as well as on the new Aviemore Direct line. Supplying the Royal Navy, based at Scapa Flow, during the First World War taxed the 'Big Goods' to the limit, especially as they worked over Drumochter Summit, the highest point on the rail network. The LMS preserved 17916 (HR No.103, first of the class) with cosmetic restoration until British Railways' Scottish Region rebuilt the locomotive in 1958, becoming a railtour celebrity in Scotland, retiring in 1965 and can now be seen in Glasgow's Riverside Museum.

Rapido's models cover the life of the class with Highland and LMS liveries and an additional 'what if?' BR early emblem livery had the class survived beyond nationalisation. Although our review model sports the useful but less striking livery of 1928 onwards LMS lined-red, there are some stunning liveries within the range, from the Highland Railway greens, lined and unlined through to No.103 in 1960s preserved livery echoing a Highland Railway yellow colour scheme. Many variations are provided for within the tooling suite with louvre, Caledonian or Drummond-style chimneys, original or Ross 'Pop' safety valves, winged and wingless smokebox plates, short- or long-strapped smokebox doors, tablet catchers, tender gongs and rear bufferbeam toolboxes on earlier models.

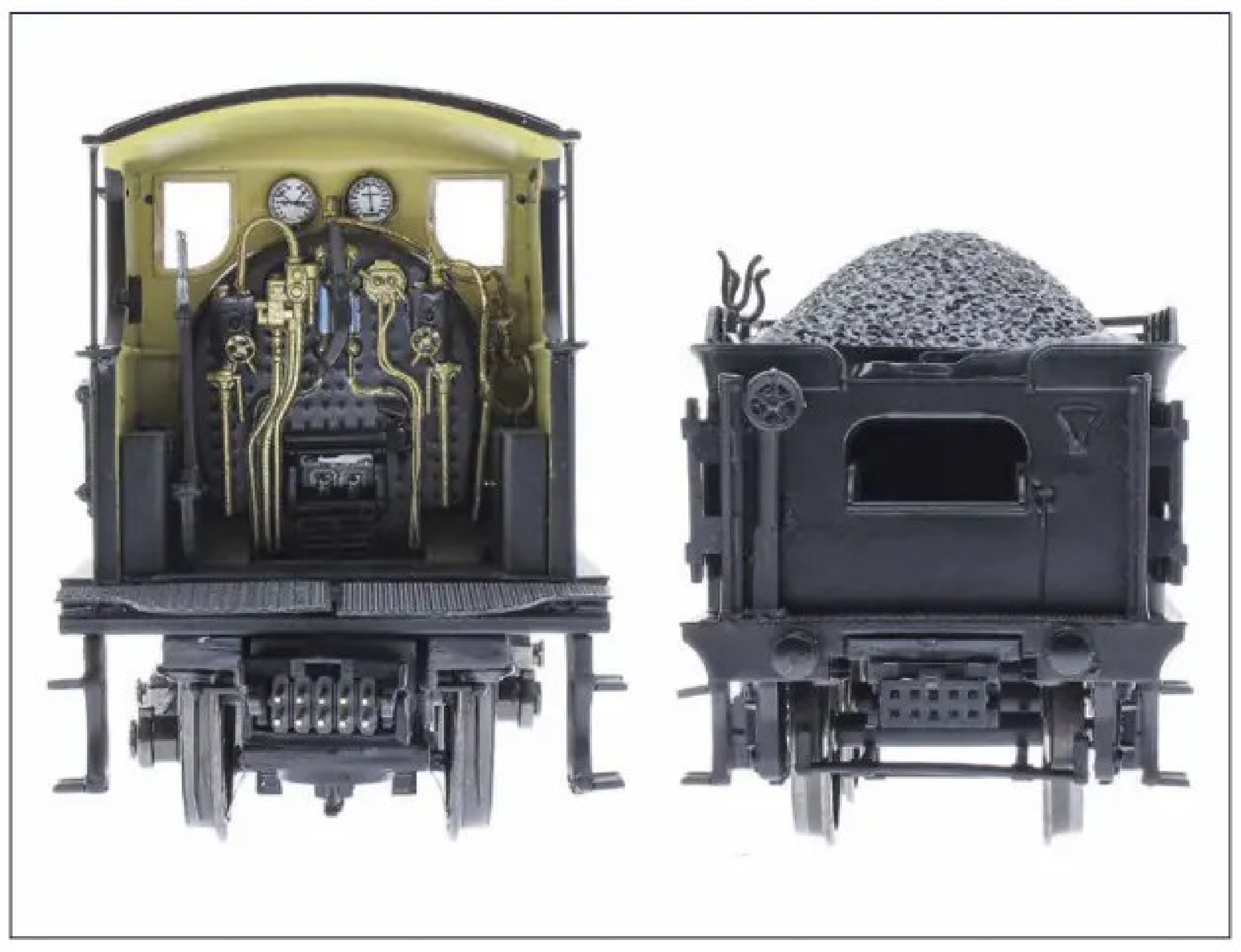
Rapido has correctly made the centre driving wheels flangeless with a slight convex surface as with the real wheels; a design that ensures the edges of the wheel tyres do not catch any track elements on sharp curvature while maintaining a degree of contact with the railhead. These centre wheels do not have electrical pick-ups, but there was no evidence of this being detrimental in testing in any way, with smooth and quiet performance through the range with certainly adequate performance, allowing the loco to capably manage eight Mark 1 coaches on test thanks to the diecast elements of the model's body.

The 21-pin decoder socket sits within the tender, accessed by the removal of four screws, as do the main factory-fitted speakers in all models, plus there is an additional small speaker beneath the chimney in the smokebox. This circuitry does mean that it's necessary to have 10 wires connecting locomotive and body, and this is tidily achieved by a secure plug and socket arrangement to connect both, as shown in our detail pictures.

Although the locomotive has clean and simple lines, there's plenty of detail to the model with many separately-fitted parts, including handrails, braking equipment, footplate details and fine coal rails and iron-holders on the tender. Early locomotives just had a coupling hook for a three-link chain, but this can be changed for later locomotives for cosmetic hook and screw-link couplings in the detail pack. This pack also contains



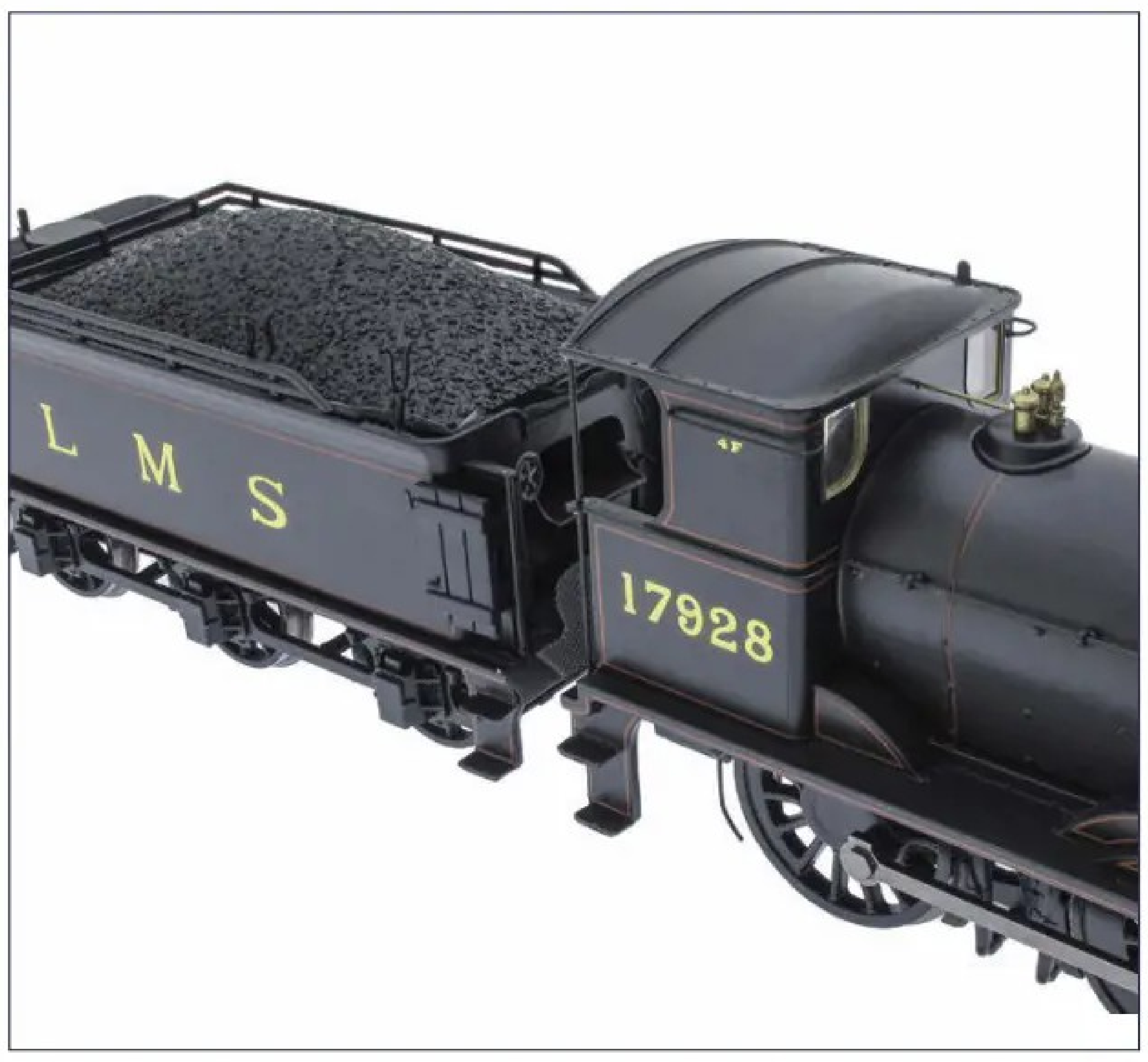
The cabside features tablet-catching equipment while the front of the tender side has a fixed side door for the footplate.



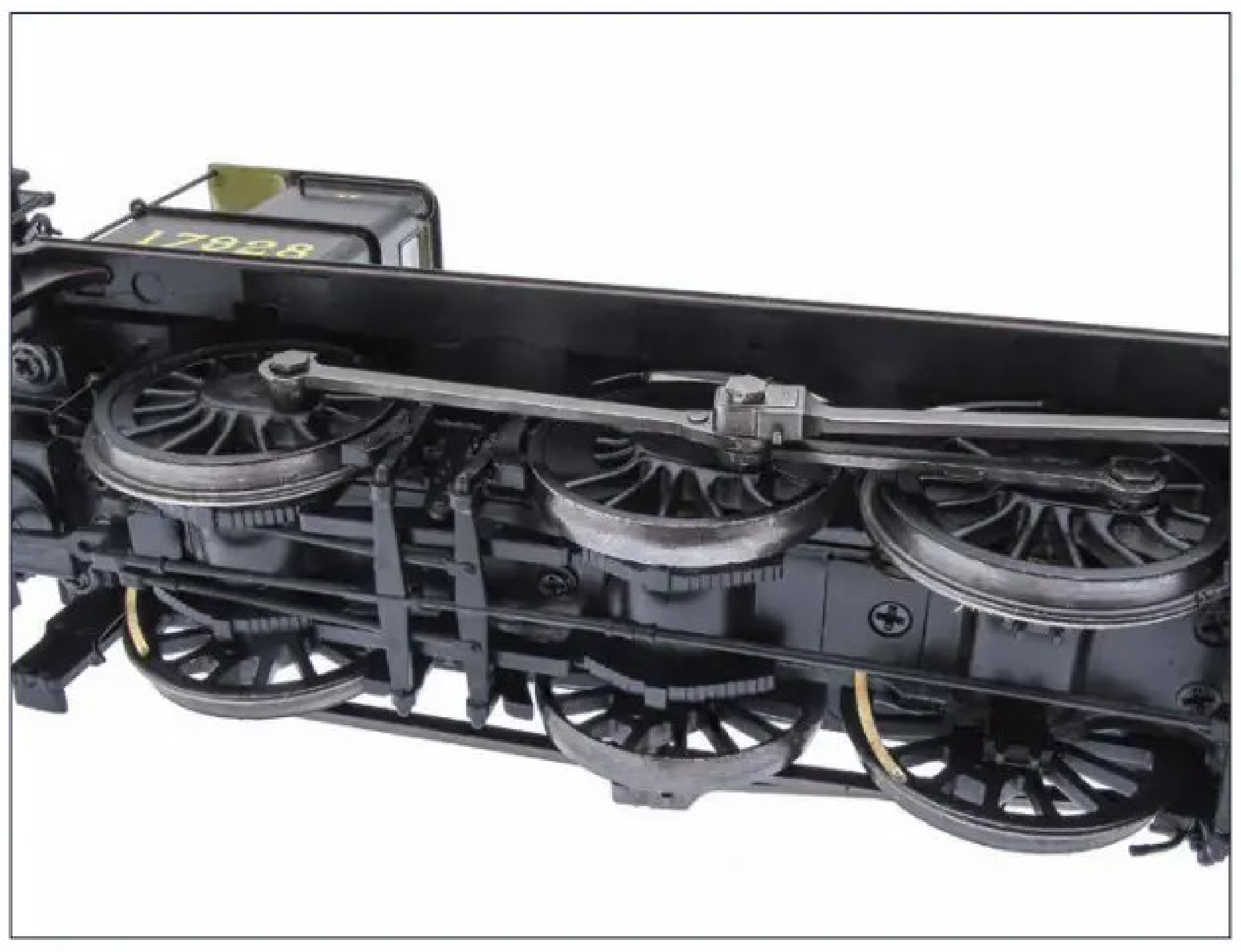
The detailed backhead with chequered fall-plates are all excellently captured, with a good level of detail to the front end of the tender.

frame extensions and guard irons to be fitted above the front axle of the leading bogie if curvature permits. I did find that these can be fitted a little further outboard of the accurate position, allowing the model to work around second radius curves.

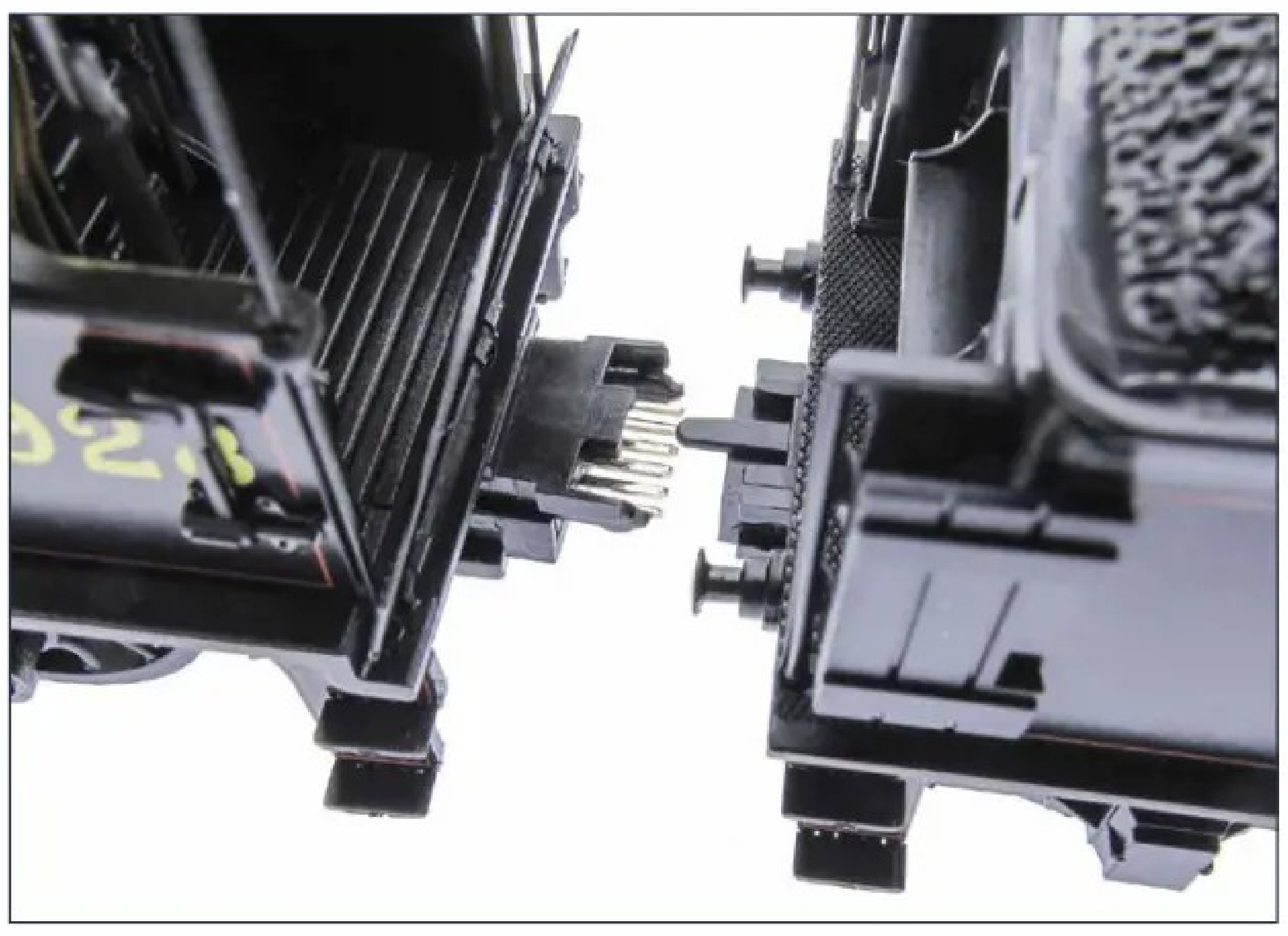
Scottish modellers frequently feel neglected with classes specific to the country; hopefully, Rapido's excellent model will encourage further interest from them and other manufactures. A good sign is that Rapido has sold all its stock on pre-order, but the models are available through Rapido stockists.



The fine lining decoration and yellow numbering is precisely applied with an appropriate density – nothing too garish!



The centre drivers are correctly flangeless and have a slight bevel to the surface, as does the museum locomotive.



The 10-pin plug and socket arrangement is a positive fit, easily disconnected if you wish, with a gap adequate to navigate second radius curves.

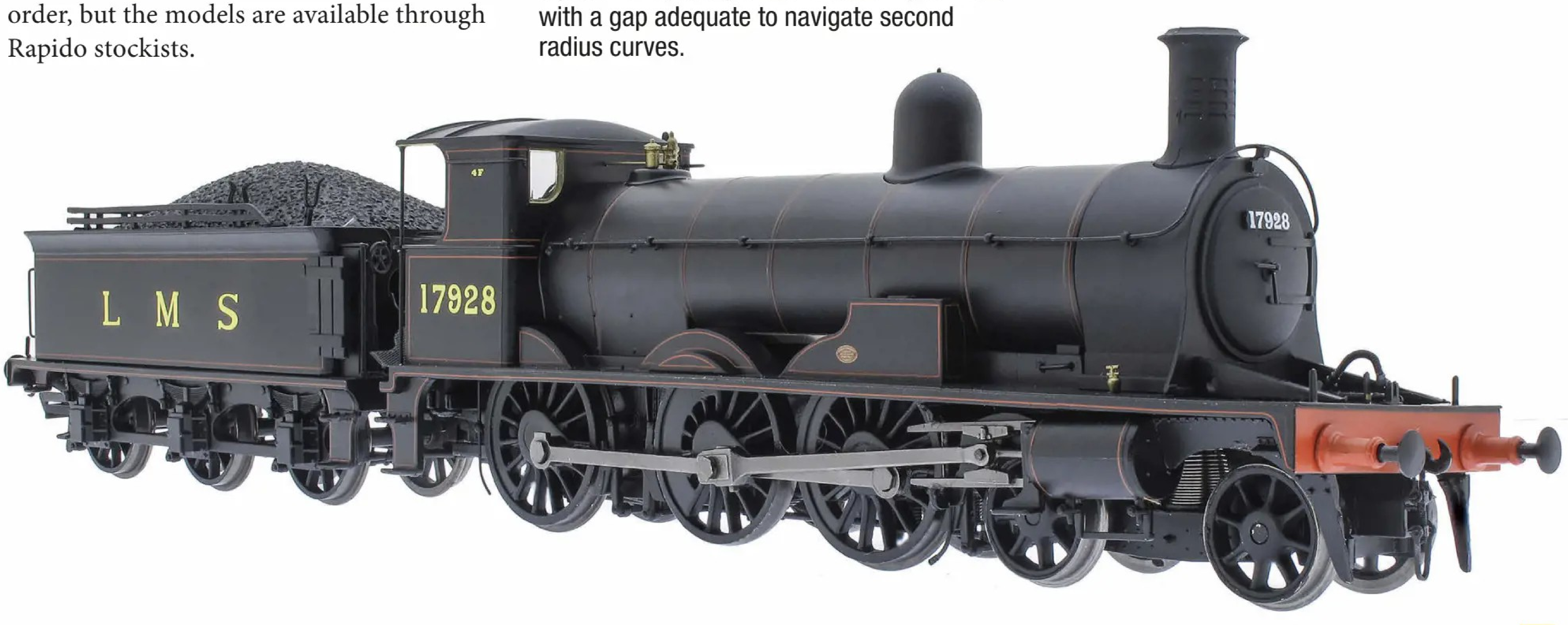
FACTFILE

Models: (review items in bold)
914001 HR Yellow (1960s condition) No.103
914002 HR Jones Green (1890s condition) No.106
914003 HR Drummond Green (1900s condition) No.113
914004 LMS Unlined Black (Early) 17920
914005 LMS Lined Black 17298
914006 LMS Unlined Black (Late) 17917
914007 BR Lined Black No.57925 - fictional
914008 HR Drummond Green (unlined) No.109
Era: 1894 - preservation
Construction: Diecast body and plastic frames
Price: DCC Ready - £219.95 DCC Sound - £319.95
DCC provision: 21-pin socket in tender
Minimum curves: Radius 2 (438mm)
Accessories: Frame extensions, cosmetic screw-link couplings

WHAT WE LIKE

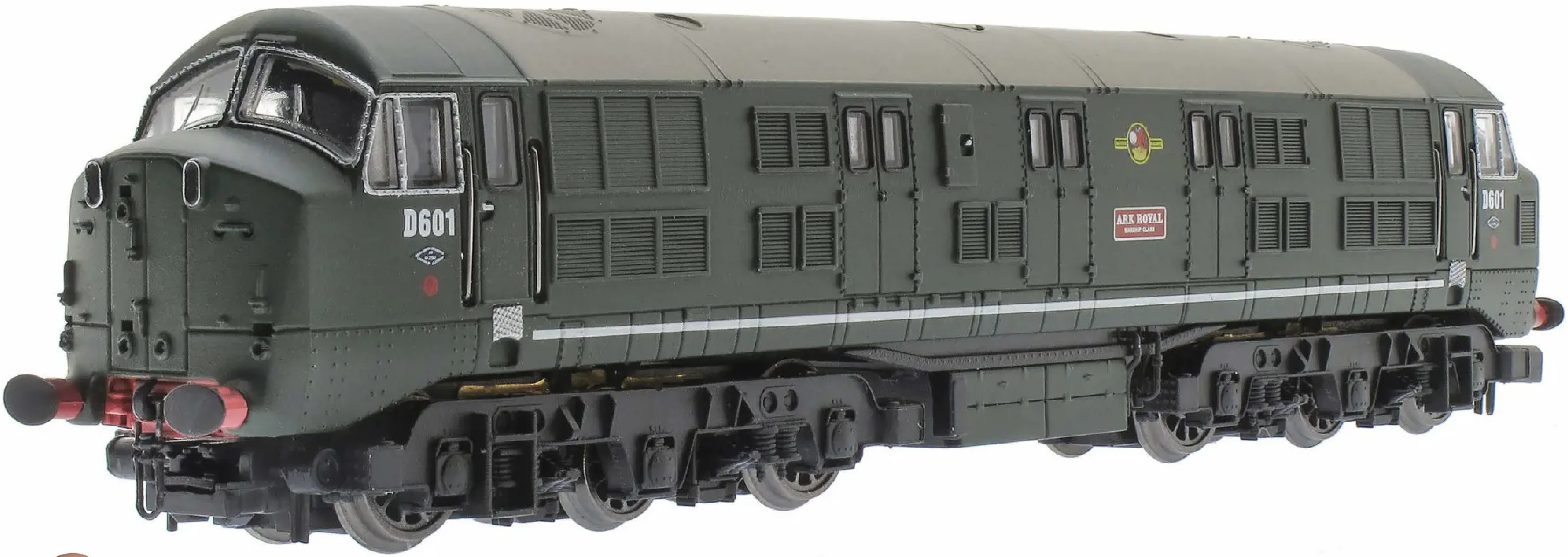
- ✓ Style
- ✓ Performance
- ✓ Decoration standards
- ✓ A Scottish prototype

Rapido's fearless approach to tackling less widespread pre-grouping locomotives continues with the first ready-to-run model of a stylish Highland Railway prototype.



N 1958-1967 £££ 174.95

EFE Rail D600 'Warship'



The North British D6xx diesel-hydraulic Warship Class, later designated as Class 41 but never carrying TOPS numbers, is a useful prototype for anyone modelling the transition years on the Western Region. Our review sample is of *Ark Royal,* as delivered in 1958.

Andy York

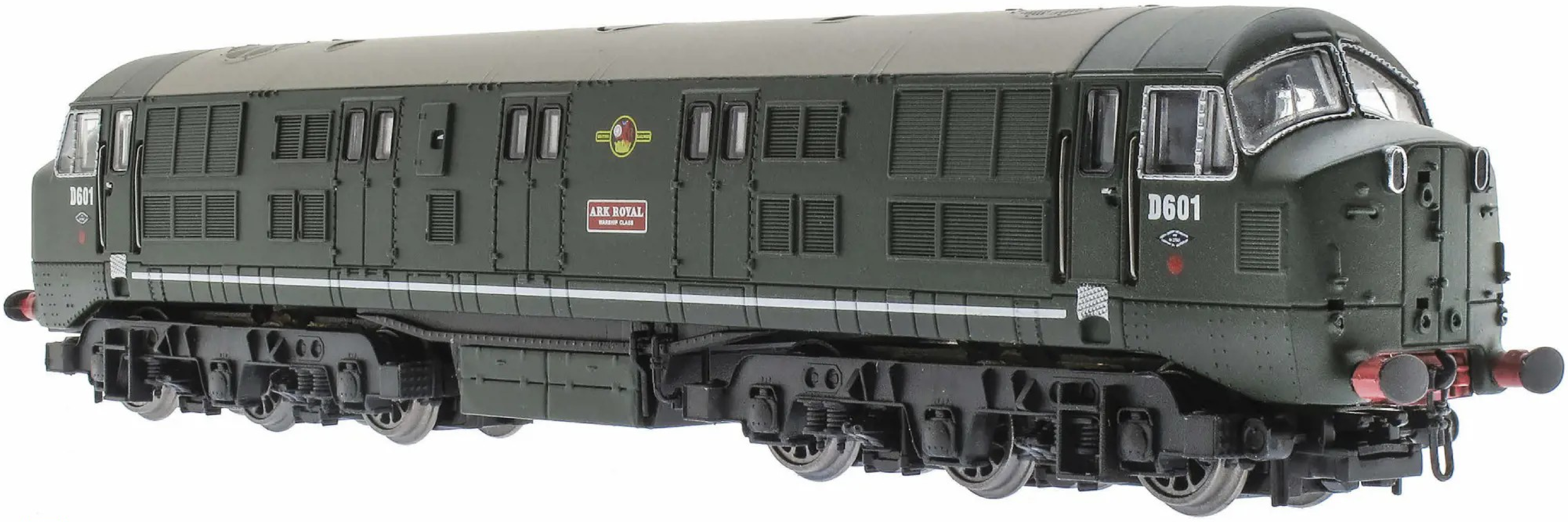
Kernow Models Rail Centre's OO model of the North British-built D6xx Warship arrived in 2019, so it's entirely logical that an N gauge model follows from the same source, given the research and design; the base is stamped as Kernow but is marketed under the EFE Rail brand and available from Bachmann stockists now.

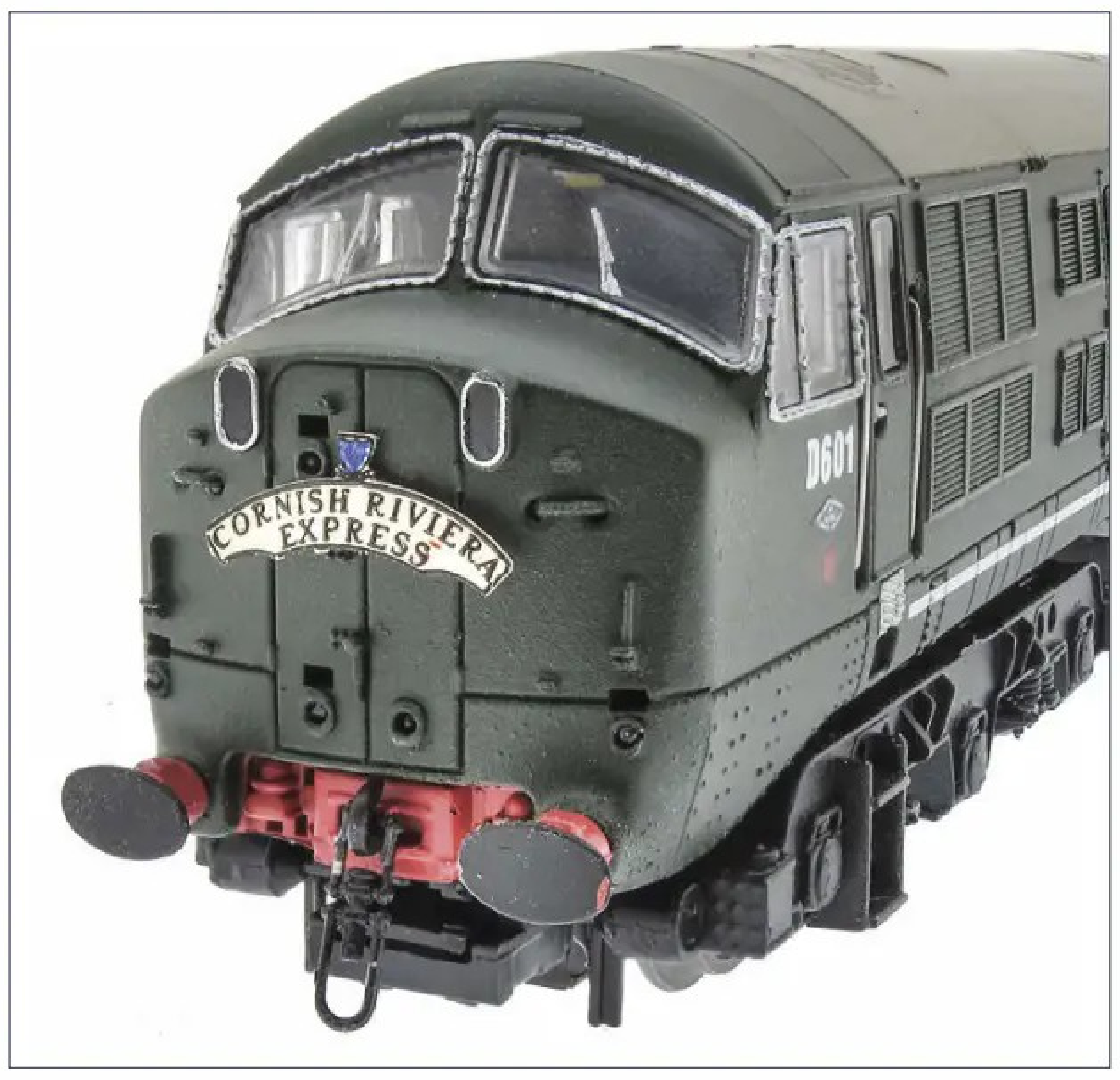
This was arguably the least successful of the mixed traffic diesel-hydraulic designs, with high-revving lightweight engines married to a heavyweight frame and body with the shortest service life of the express hydraulics, lasting a mere nine years. EFE Rail has covered the life of the class in the launch products, from this review sample in earliest disc-headcode form in all-over green, along with D604, D601 and D602 in green with small yellow panels – the last-mentioned with headcode boxes, D602 in blue with small yellow panels and D600 in blue with full yellow ends.

The model is a great performer thanks to the coreless motor married to two flywheels driving both bogies by cardan shafts and a weighty diecast chassis block. The drive is to the outer axles of each bogie, reflecting the A1A-A1A wheel arrangement of the class, although electrical pick-up is from all wheels. The wheels are of the correct spoked type and nicely blackened. Some users have reported issues with the keeper plate beneath the bogies grounding on pointwork due to the rounded axle protrusions.

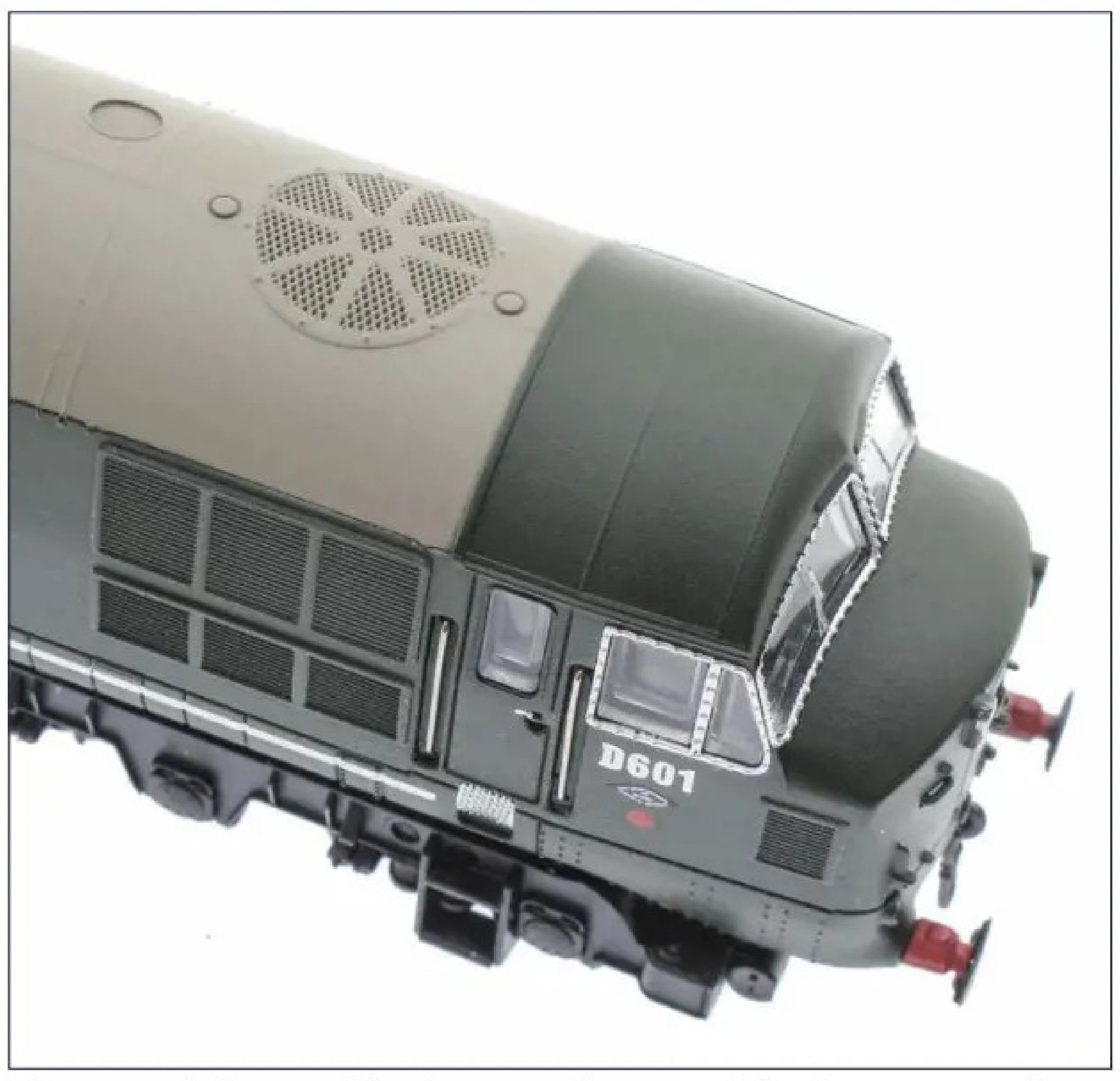
The styling of the prototype could be regarded as brutal and functional and somewhat heavy in appearance; the model captures the heft well but I find that the panel lines of the body and the vent frames somewhat heavier than scale. There's a good density to the base colour and any of the detail printing, though the finish is somewhat flatter than you would expect to see on a Farish model, and, under close magnification during photography, has a definite texture rather than smoothness, which leads to the matt finish.

The detail packs provide all of the bufferbeam detailing necessary and nose end steps if you have sufficient curvature clearance. As there is a fret of four painted etched headboards, all for the Cornish Riviera Express, I was surprised that there was not an etch for

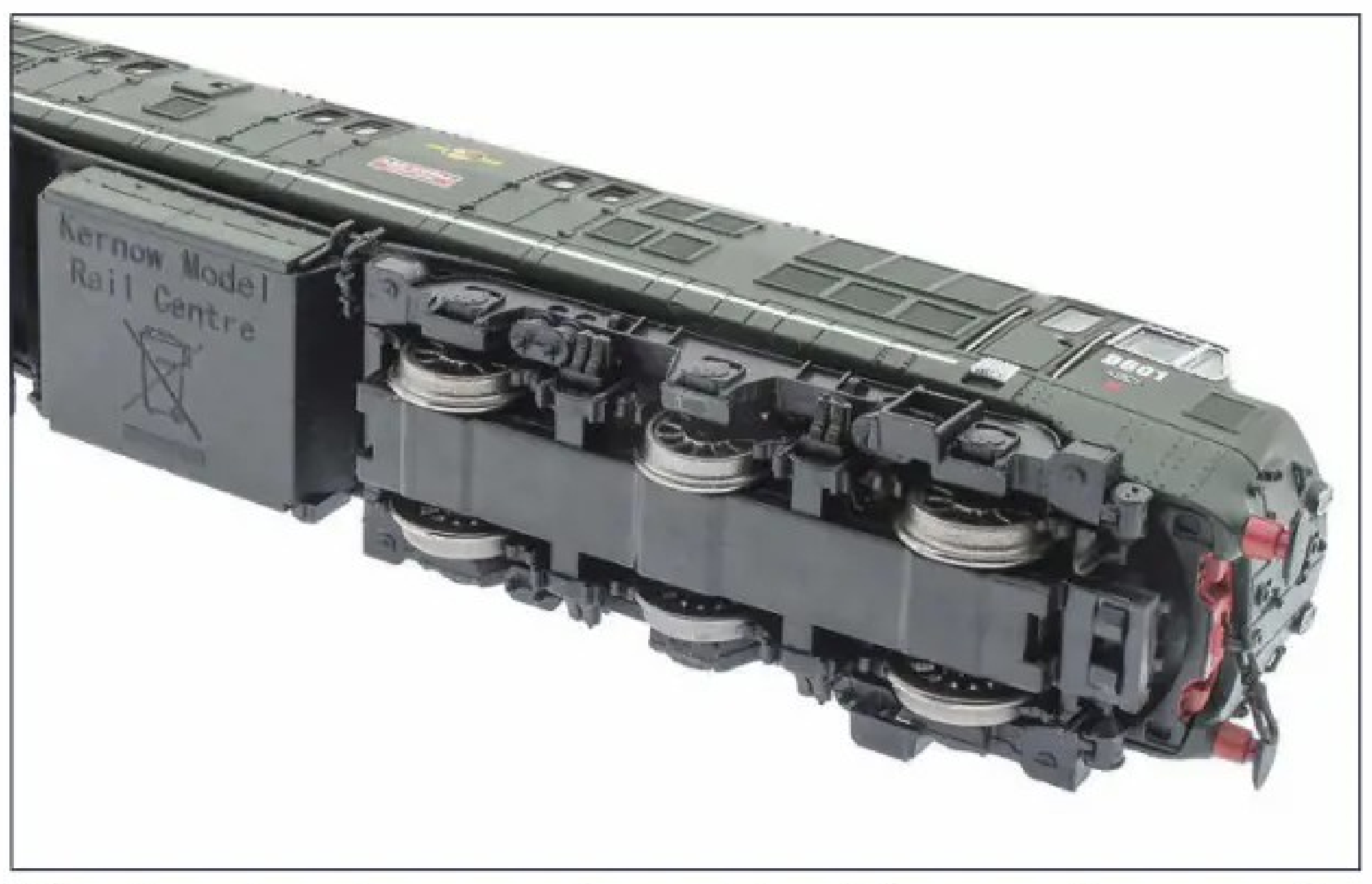




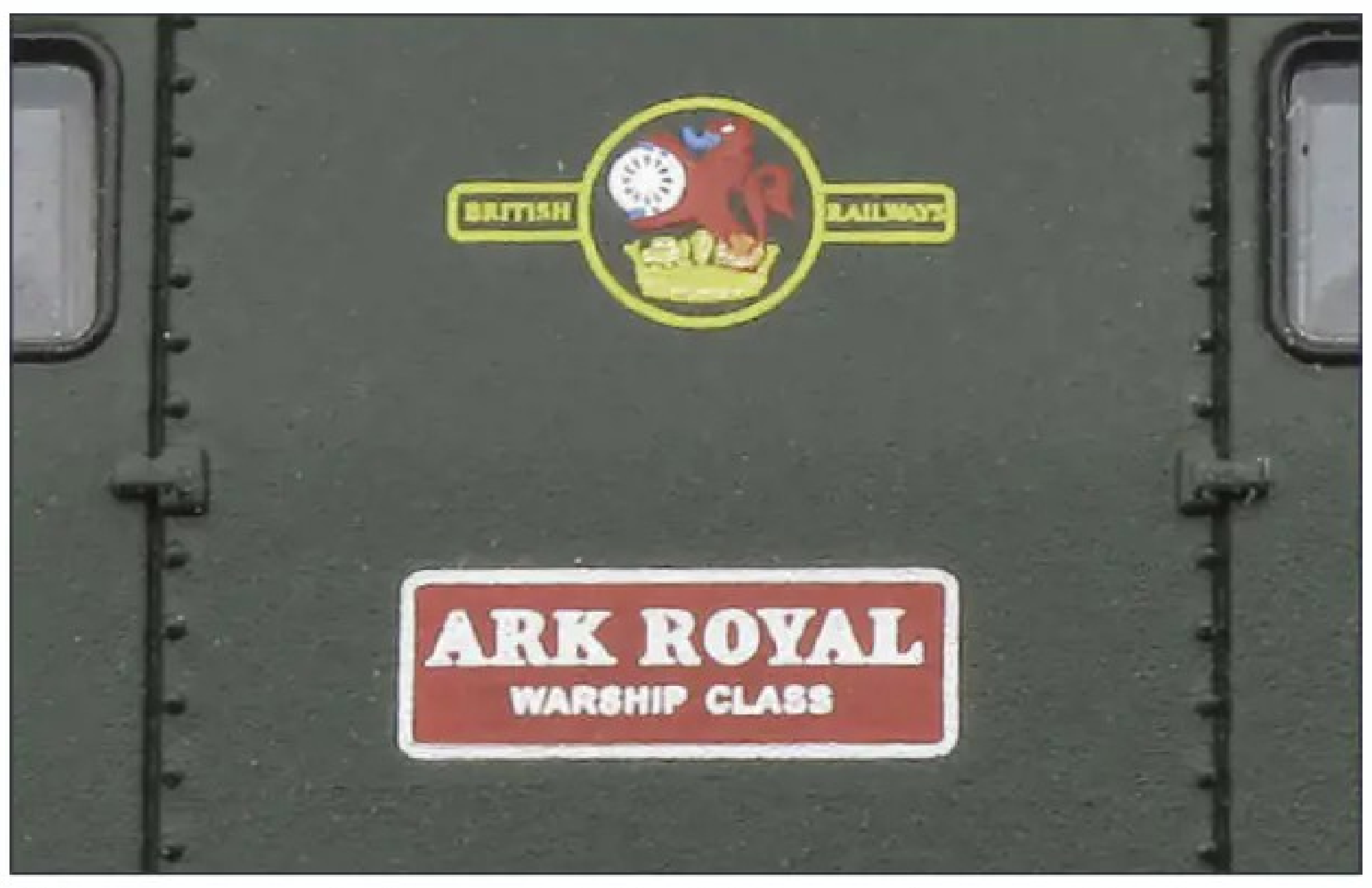
The supplied headboards set the model off nicely. The rectangular holes are for fitting the supplied headcode discs.



The roof fan grille is neatly moulded as are all of the bodyside grilles, although the window frame bolts are over-pronounced.



The bogies have outer-axle drive and current collection from all wheelsets; the centre fuel tank is easily removed to fit a small sugarcube speaker.



The nameplate and late BR crest are nicely printed for the scale. The matt finish gives it a somewhat duller appearance than you would expect to see on a Farish model.

FACTFILE

Models: (review items in bold)
E84522 Headcode Box D600 *Active* BR Blue
E84523 Disc Headcode D601 *Ark Royal* BR Green (L/Crest)
E84524 Headcode Box D602 *Bulldog* BR Blue (SYP)
E84525 Headcode Box D602 *Bulldog* BR Green (SYP)
E84526 Disc Headcode D601 *Ark Royal* BR Green (SYP)
E84527 Disc Headcode D604 *Cossack* BR Green (L/Crest)
Era: 1958-1967
Construction: Plastic body with diecast chassis
DCC provision: Next18 socket
Weight: 109g
Minimum curves: Radius 2 (263mm)
Accessories: Bufferbeam detailing, headcode discs, headboards

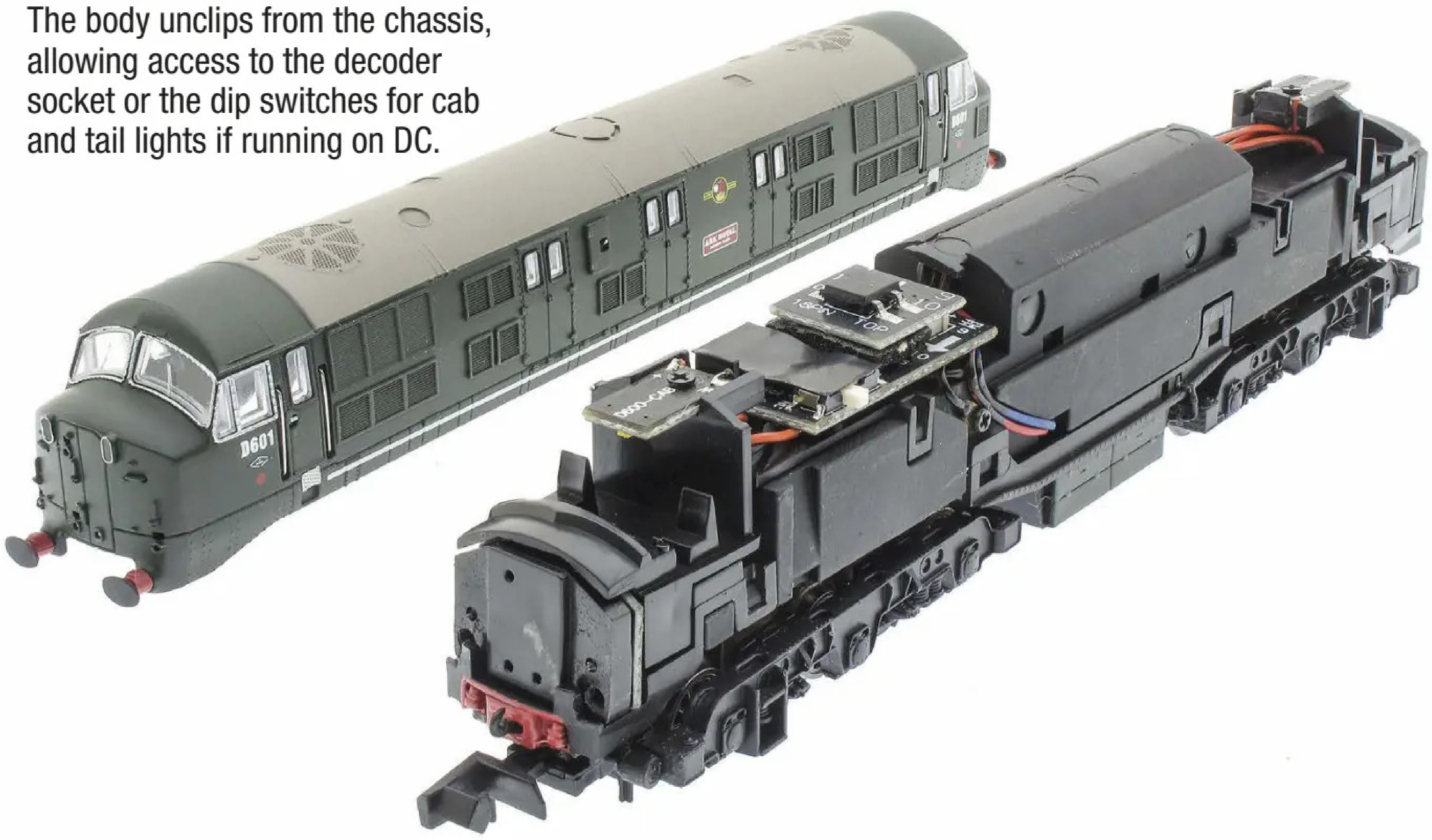
WHAT WE LIKE

✓ Distinctive prototype
✓ Performance
✓ Lighting

the bodyside nameplates although, in this scale, the printing is perfectly adequate and neatly applied. Headcode discs in both open and closed positions are supplied to configure as you wish with a small peg pushing into the rectangular holes; it's fiddly and can be made easier by shaving a little of the paint of the peg on the rear of the disc; you do, however, get left with a hole where a disc is not fitted or in closed form. It's certainly easier to fit the small bufferbeam detailing parts if you separate the body from the chassis.

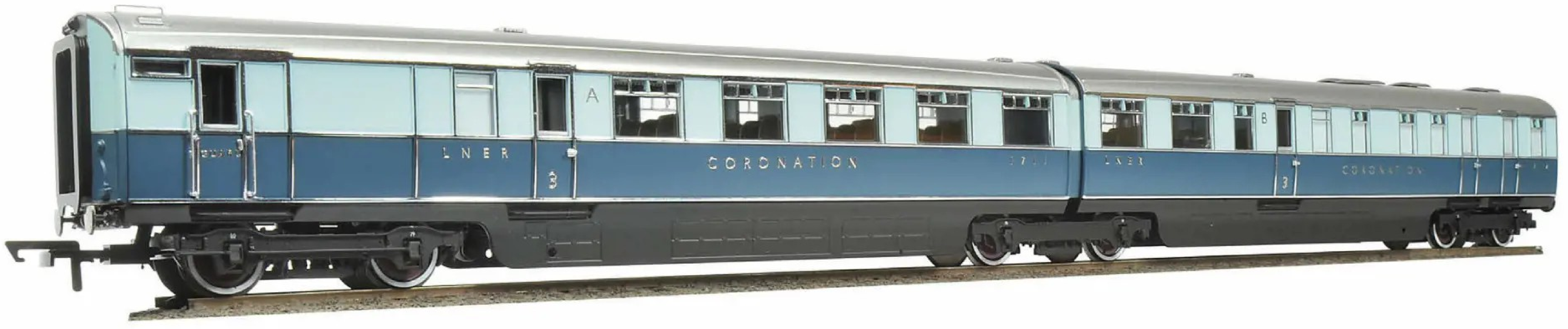
The tiny marker lights and single red light on the tail are especially pleasing; nicely muted in appearance and tone. The cab light is somewhat brighter, but this can, along with the tail light, be turned on or off using the dip switches inside the body once unclipped. Of course, these are more easily configured if you are a DCC user and have fitted a Next18 decoder to the socket. If you wish to fit a sound decoder, there is space inside the fuel tanks between the bogies (which easily unclip) for a small sugarcube speaker. The models are only supplied as DCC-ready and have an RRP of £174.95. It's another gap filled for Western Region modellers and will be a capable performer on the heaviest of trains.

The body unclips from the chassis, allowing access to the decoder socket or the dip switches for cab and tail lights if running on DC.



00 1937-1939 £££ 149.99

Hornby 'Coronation' Streamlined Twins



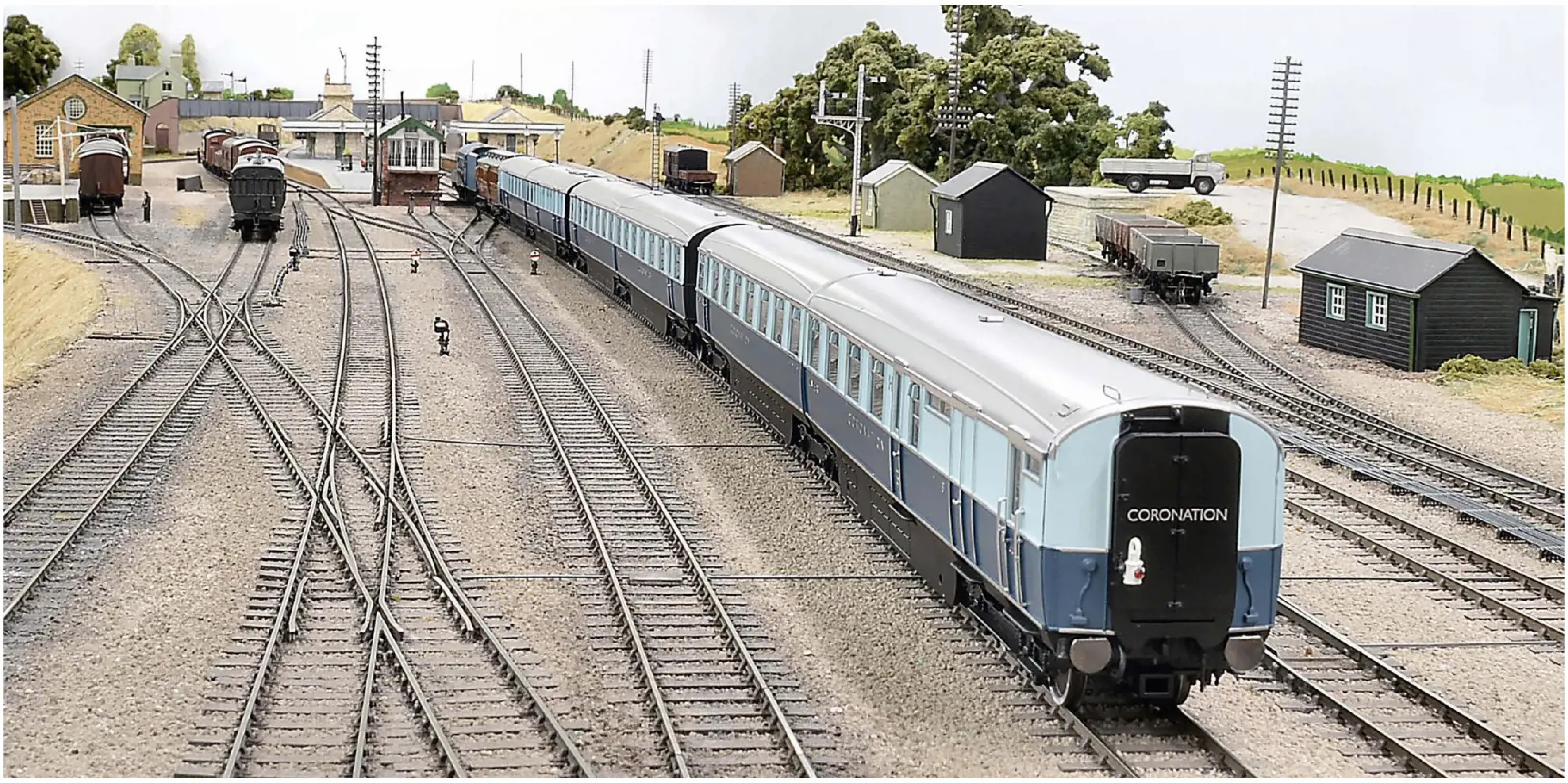
The BTO and RTO twin. Tension-locks are fitted at each outer end, but the alternative magnetic couplings supplied give much greater intimacy.

Tony Wright

Right from the start, I must express an interest here because I assisted Hornby's designer of these wonderful models in a very small way during their development. The fact that they're outstanding owes precious little to me, so I think I can conduct a fair review without a preference, prejudice, or a 'clash of interests'.

It's a very brave move on the part of the manufacturer to introduce these articulated cars because, in the 'Coronation' guise depicted (apart from in the rarest of occurrences), they only ever ran as a complete train – eight cars during the winter and nine during the summer, when the Observation Car was attached to the rear. So, for accuracy, a fair amount of cash needs to be spent, but that cash will be well-spent.

The LNER introduced Britain's first high-speed train in the form of the 'Silver Jubilee' in the autumn of 1935. Gresley and his team produced the A4s to haul it – the first fully-streamlined train to run in this country. It ran between Newcastle and Kings Cross daily at an average speed of over a mile a minute. In 1937, the streamlined concept was extended to Edinburgh, in the form of the 'Coronation'. As with the 'Silver Jubilee', articulation was employed, but exclusively sets of twins, not a triplet (later two) as used in the 'Silver Jubilee'. Whereas the earlier train was in silver livery, the 'Coronation' was turned out in a magnificent two-tone blue – Marlborough for the upper panels and Garter for the lower section.

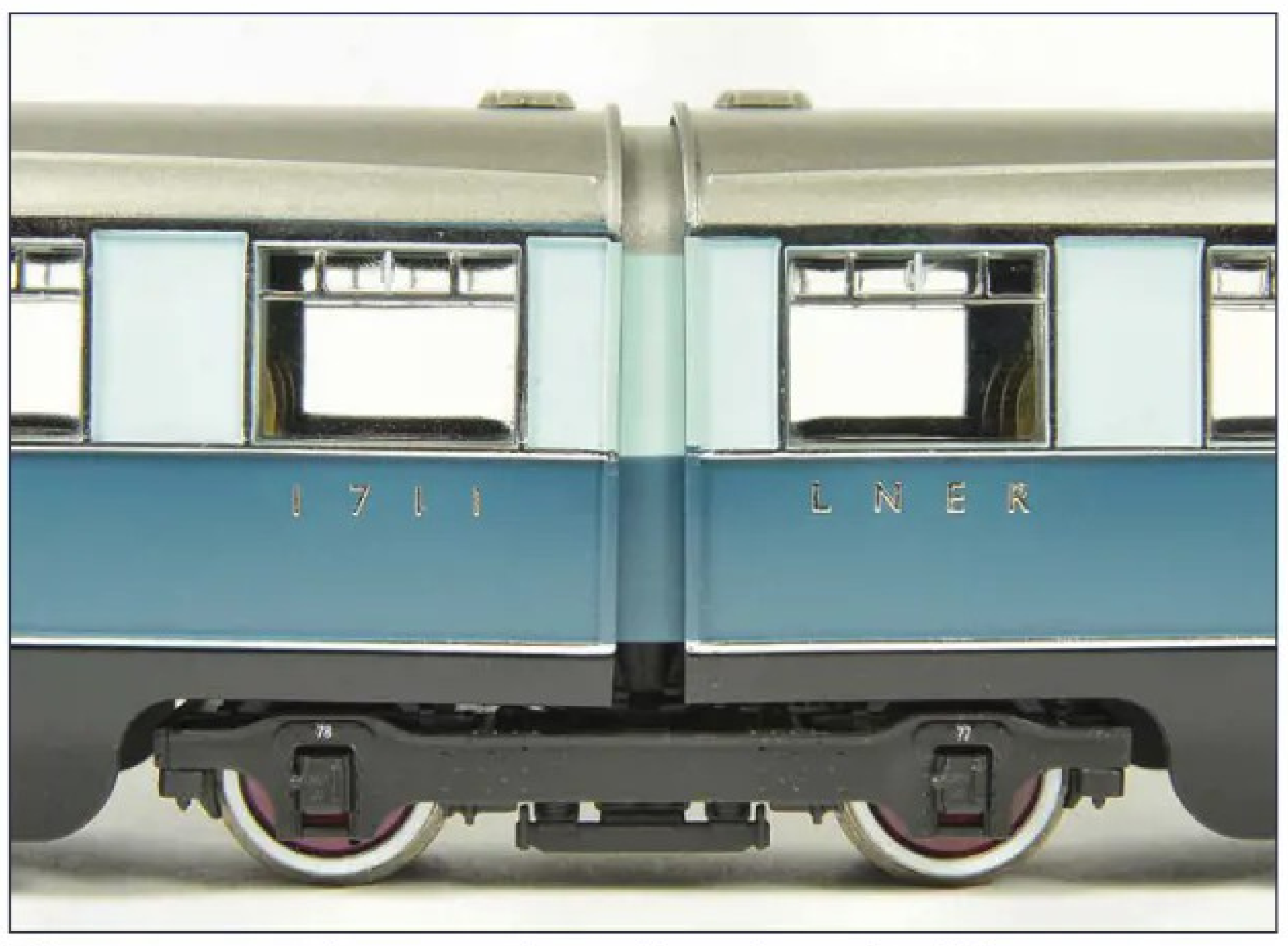


The six-car set (plus Rapido's Dynamometer Car), which ran behind Mallard during her record-breaking run.

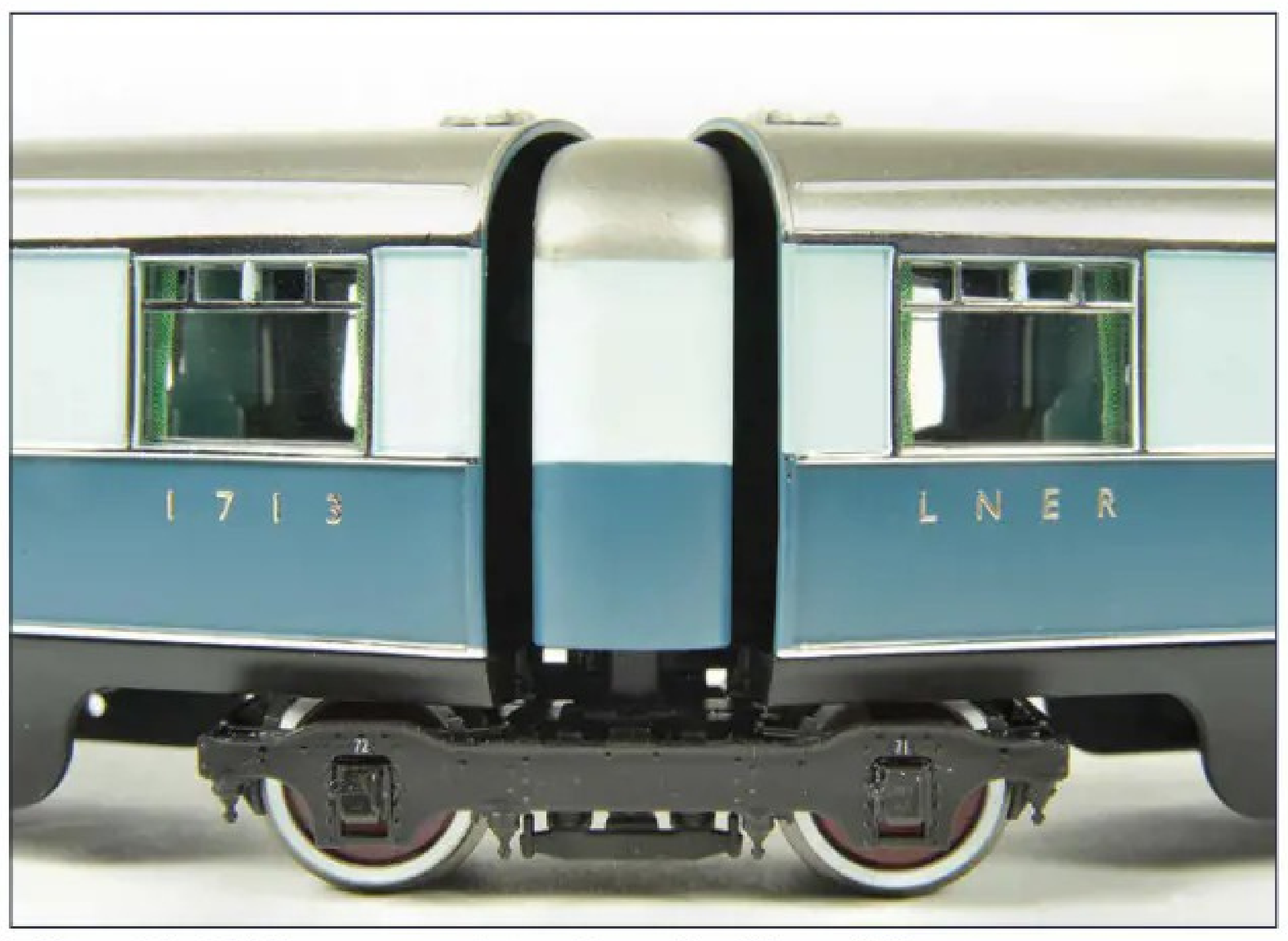
New A4s in garter blue were built for the service at the same time. Two 'Coronation' sets were built and a spare which carried no branding, then a further identical set for the 'West Riding' (Kings Cross-Leeds), making four trains in all (just two Observation Cars). The spare set was used for any of the streamlined services from time to time, including the 'Silver Jubilee'. Six of the cars became the fastest steam-hauled carriages in history, when they sped behind *Mallard* as she broke the world speed record for steam on July 3rd, 1938!

The three streamlined services ran with enviable reliability up to the outbreak of WW2, when all the sets were withdrawn and stored for the duration. Two twins were destroyed by fire during the war at Doncaster (not by enemy action), and post-war the full sets never ran again (although six cars from the 'West Riding' formed part of the early BR train of the same name). They retained their original livery, but lost their stainless steel branding. BR carmine/cream was then applied, by which time the lower skirts had been removed. Finally, lined maroon was applied to the survivors, and extra doors were added at the inner ends following a fire at Huntingdon when passengers found difficulty in escaping. Despite their not running as complete sets, the ex-streamlined survivors found use in several of BR's principal trains throughout the '50s and early-'60s, including 'The Aberdonian', the 'West Riding', 'Master Cutler', 'South Yorkshireman and 'The Talismans', the last mentioned FO/FOs being fitted with roller bearings. Both Observation Cars were rebuilt at Cowlairs in 1959 – improving the view for those inside, but ruining the aesthetics of the outside. They're the only survivors from any of these great trains, and at least one has been re-rebuilt into its original form.

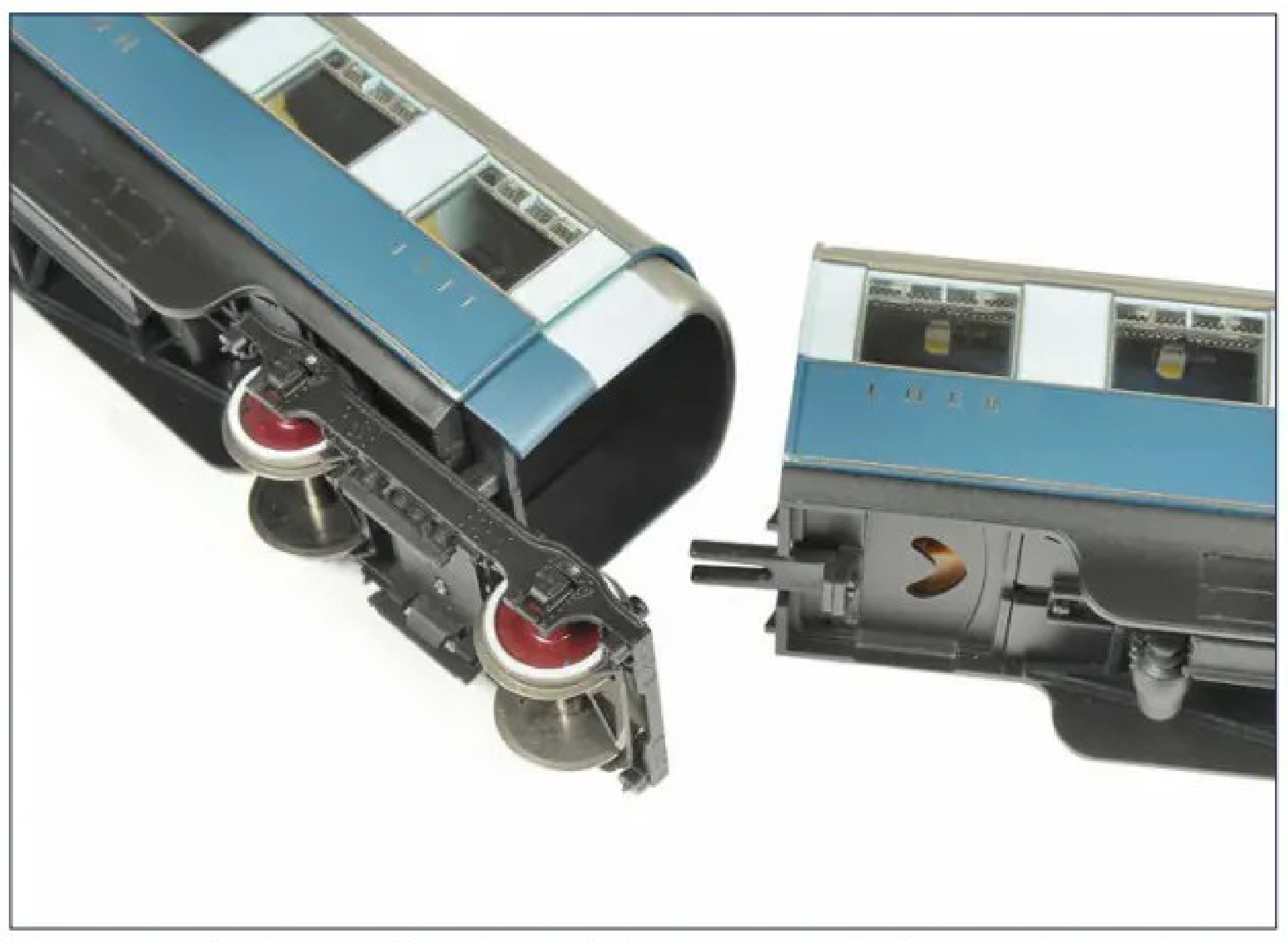
How do the models match up? Hornby produced a set for the rival LMS 'Coronation Scot' some time ago, which was excellent. However, as with the prototype, these were modifications to existing types and not an entirely new concept, which includes articulation. Described as 'Trains of Great Thought', great thought must have gone into the designs of these streamlined models, because their riding is exceptionally good – not easy to achieve where in many cases the owners have only train set curves! The articulation is ingenious, allowing really intimate distance between cars in the middle of the twins. Couplings between the twins are standard tension-locks, which are really a long way apart, but alternatives are supplied for closer-coupling. Correct, heavy-duty Gresley double-bolster bogies are fitted – 8' 6" for the ends and central for the non-catering cars and 10' for the central bogie on the catering cars.



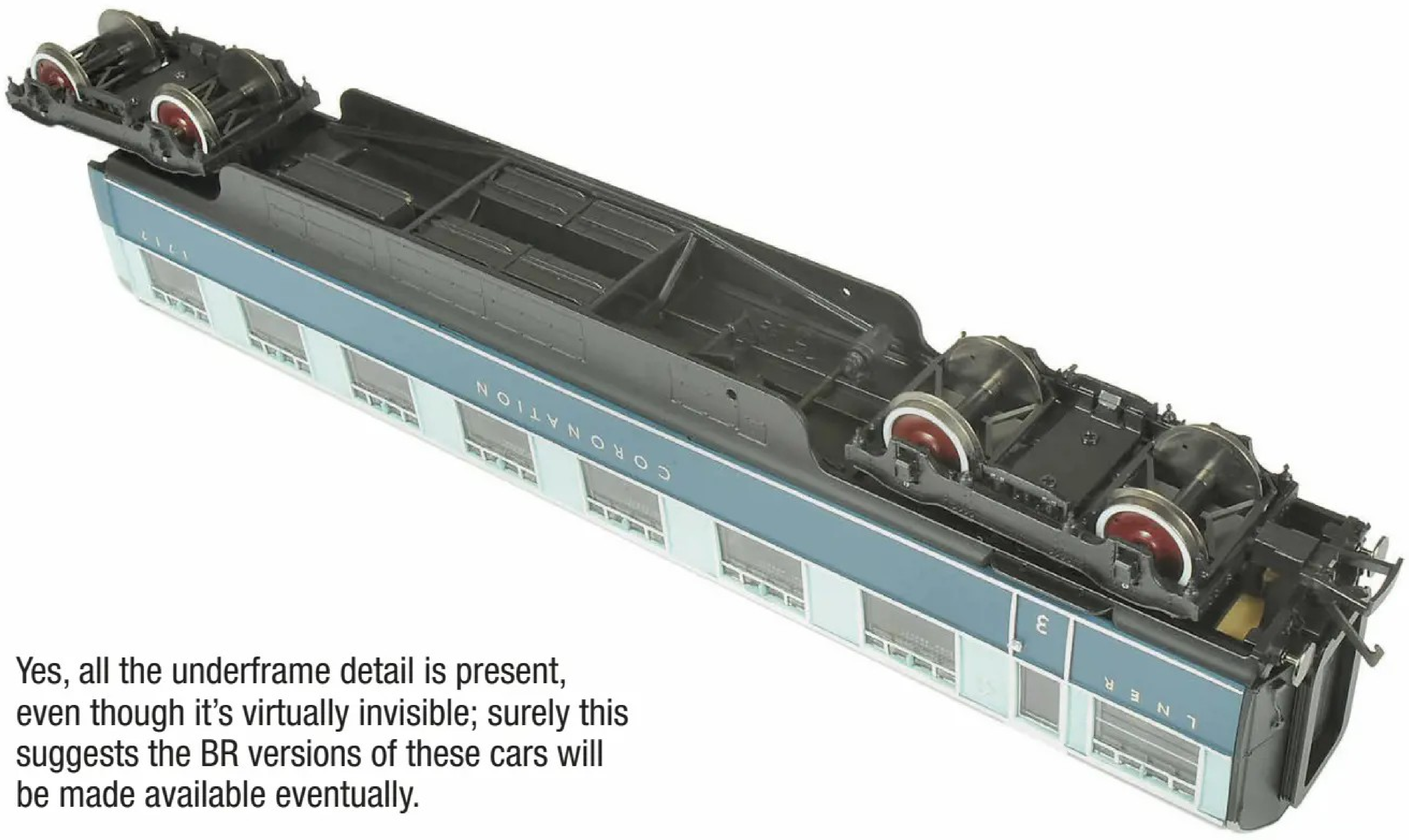
The correct heavy-duty Gresley double-bolster 10' articulated bogie fitted to the catering cars.



The 8' 6" heavy-duty bogie fitted between the open cars. On tight curves the cars move further apart.



Each twin is articulated by a most-ingenious idea, enabling the cars to negotiate tight radii. Seen before in part (Keen Systems), but never on an articulated bogie.



Yes, all the underframe detail is present, even though it's virtually invisible; surely this suggests the BR versions of these cars will be made available eventually.

The wheel centres are painted red, which I assume is correct. Incredibly, though it's impossible to see behind the skirts from 'normal' viewing angles, full underfame detail is included, appropriate to each twin –extra battery boxes and a second dynamo on the catering cars for instance. Even the trussing is there (which suggests that these carriages will be made available in BR guise in future?). The buffers are not sprung, though this is of no relevance.

Consulting all the literature/drawings/photographs I have on these carriages, they are extremely accurate in just about all dimensions. The livery finish is of the highest quality, though the stainless steel bands are a bit too thick, standing further out from the bodyside than scale (the real things were made of thin stainless steel strip). I imagine this is to ease application of the bands, and it's only really noticeable at close quarters. The instructions state they're made of foil (as is the lettering/numbering), so they're placed over a moulding it would seem. The instructions suggest careful handling so as not to damage this delicate foil. Full interior detail is also present, appropriate to the cars depicted, and it's all visible because the cars are lit. There must be a capacitor present because the lights stay on for a few seconds after power is switched off, and there is no distracting flickering as they run by. Detail on the roof is minimal, though accurate. The real things were pressure-ventilated, so only a few monsoon ventilators and kitchen cowls were present.

There are a few additions for the owner to fit if desired, including representations of the rubber fairings between adjacent twins (attached by magnets) and end detail.

In conclusion, I think these streamliners are outstanding. There have been alternatives in the past, including very expensive RTR sets, and kits, both plastic and metal, but, in my view, none is the equal of these latest Hornby cars in terms of performance and (particularly in the form of the kit-built cars) appearance. As intimated, the level of underframe detail suggests these cars will be eventually available in BR guise, and this will make them more accessible in my view. Why? Because only one twin will need purchasing in the main, not a whole rake.

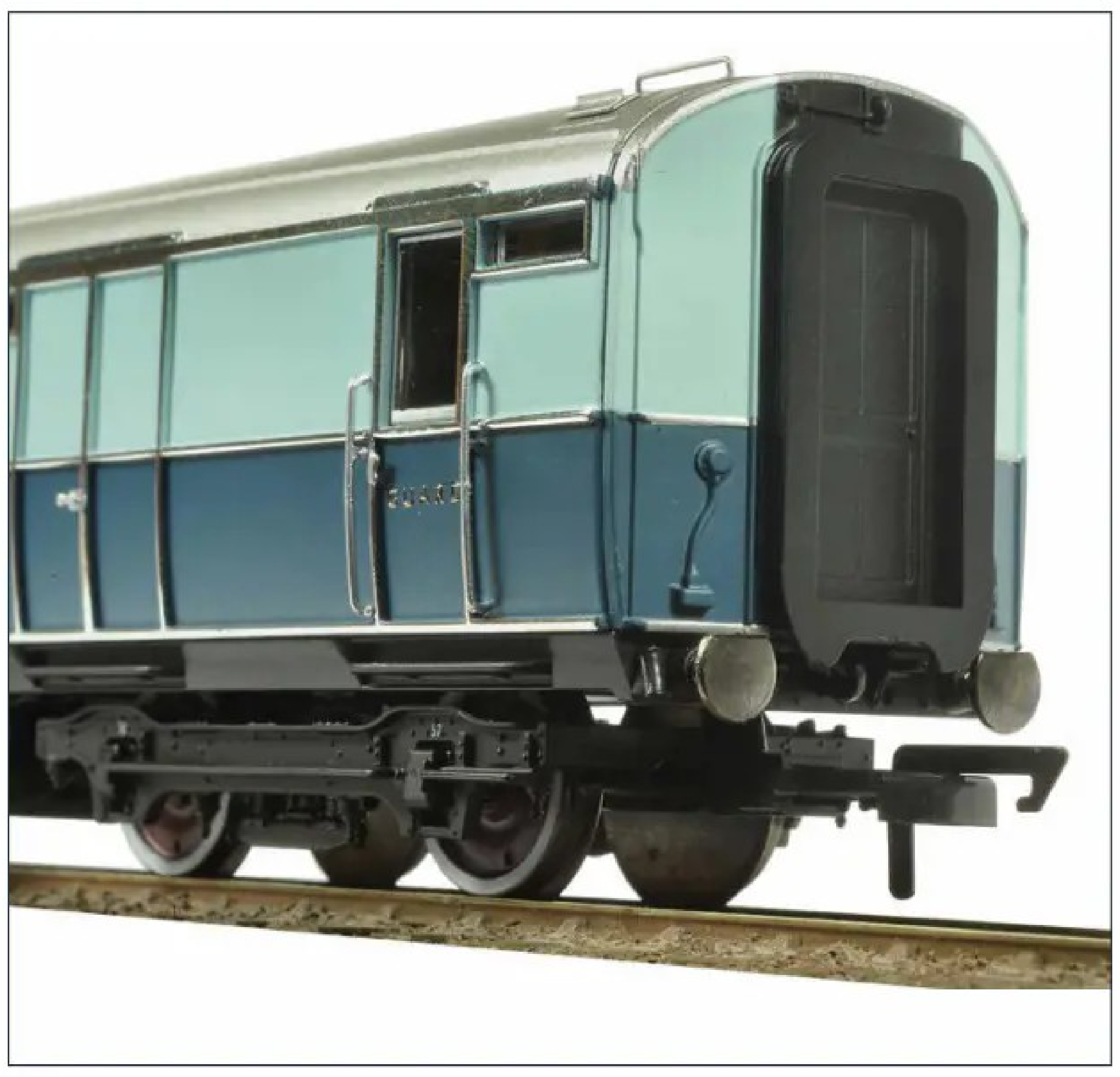
Thoroughly recommended.

FACTFILE

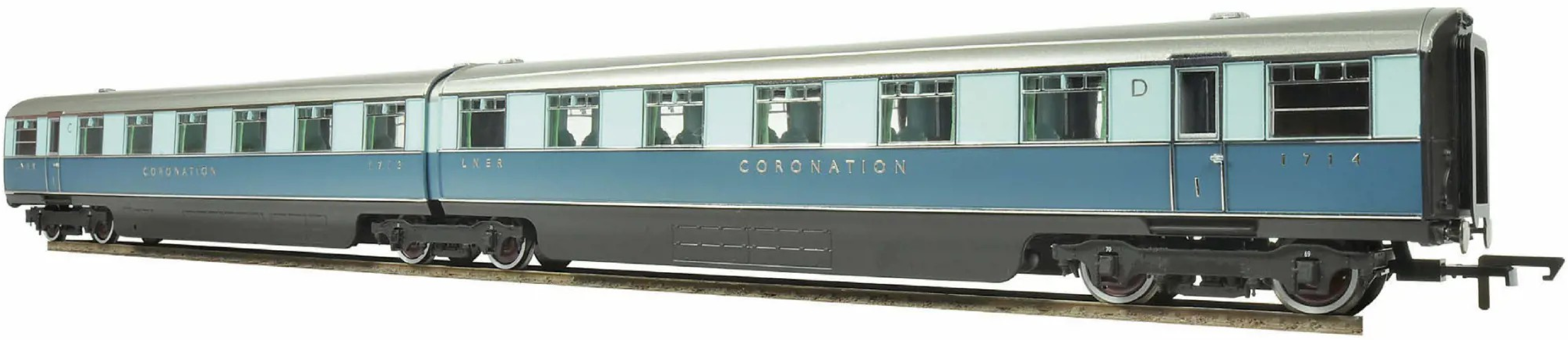
Models:
R40223 LNER, Coronation Brake Third & Kitchen Third Articulated Coach Pack
R40225 LNER, Coronation Open Third & Kitchen Third Articulated Coach Pack
R40224 LNER, Coronation Double Open First Articulated Coach Pack
R40226 LNER, Coronation Open Third & Brake Third Articulated Coach Pack
Era: 3 (1937-1939)
Construction: Plastic with metal wheelsets
Weight: 190g
Minimum curves: Radius 2 (438mm)
Accessories: Alternative couplings, joining sections attached by magnets, end boards and pipework

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Superlative running
- ✓ Overall accuracy
- ✓ Quality of finish
- ✓ Attention to detail
- ✓ Value for money



The stainless steel adornments are heat-applied foil (very delicate), necessitating a slightly thicker-than-scale beading.



NG7 1875 onwards £££ 34.95

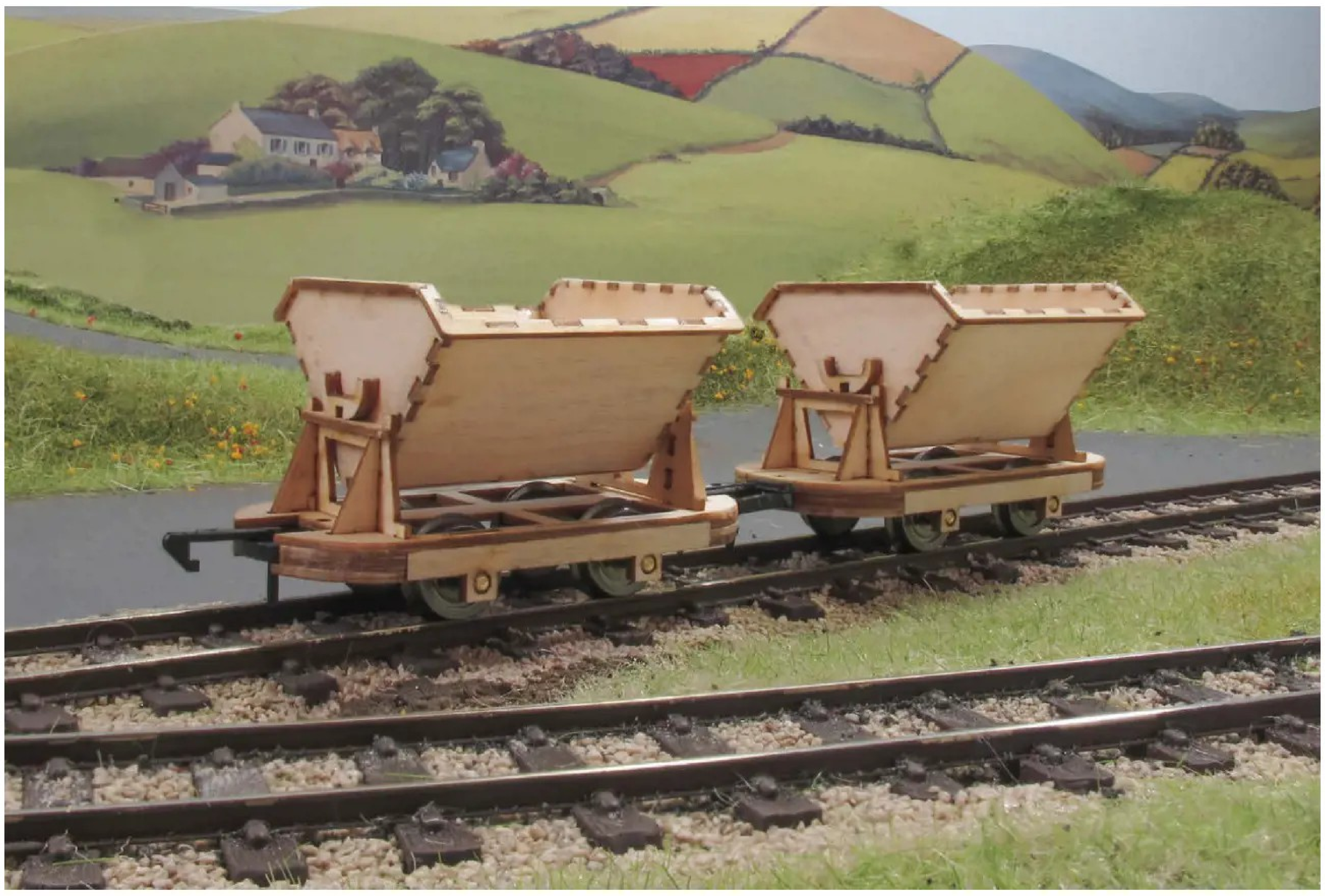
Peco narrow gauge skip wagon kits

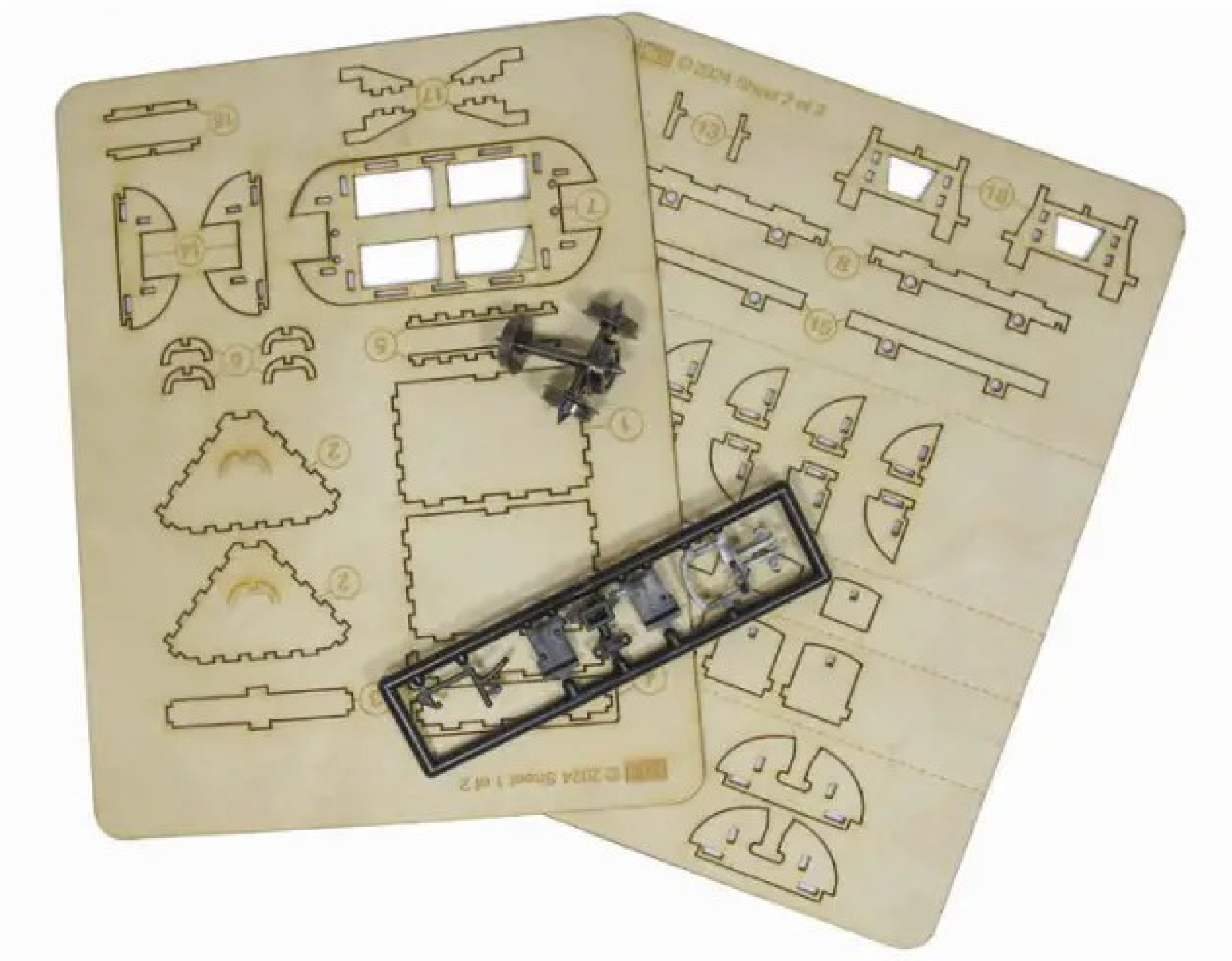
Phil Parker

Very few narrow gauge railways won't have at least a few skip wagons at some point. Since the design was patented by Robert Hudson in 1875, they have been the most numerous type, mostly produced by iron and steel manufacturers rather than the railway companies themselves. Sadly, despite their ubiquity, there's not that much recorded history; these wagons were there to do a job and were loved no more than a modern wheelbarrow at the time.

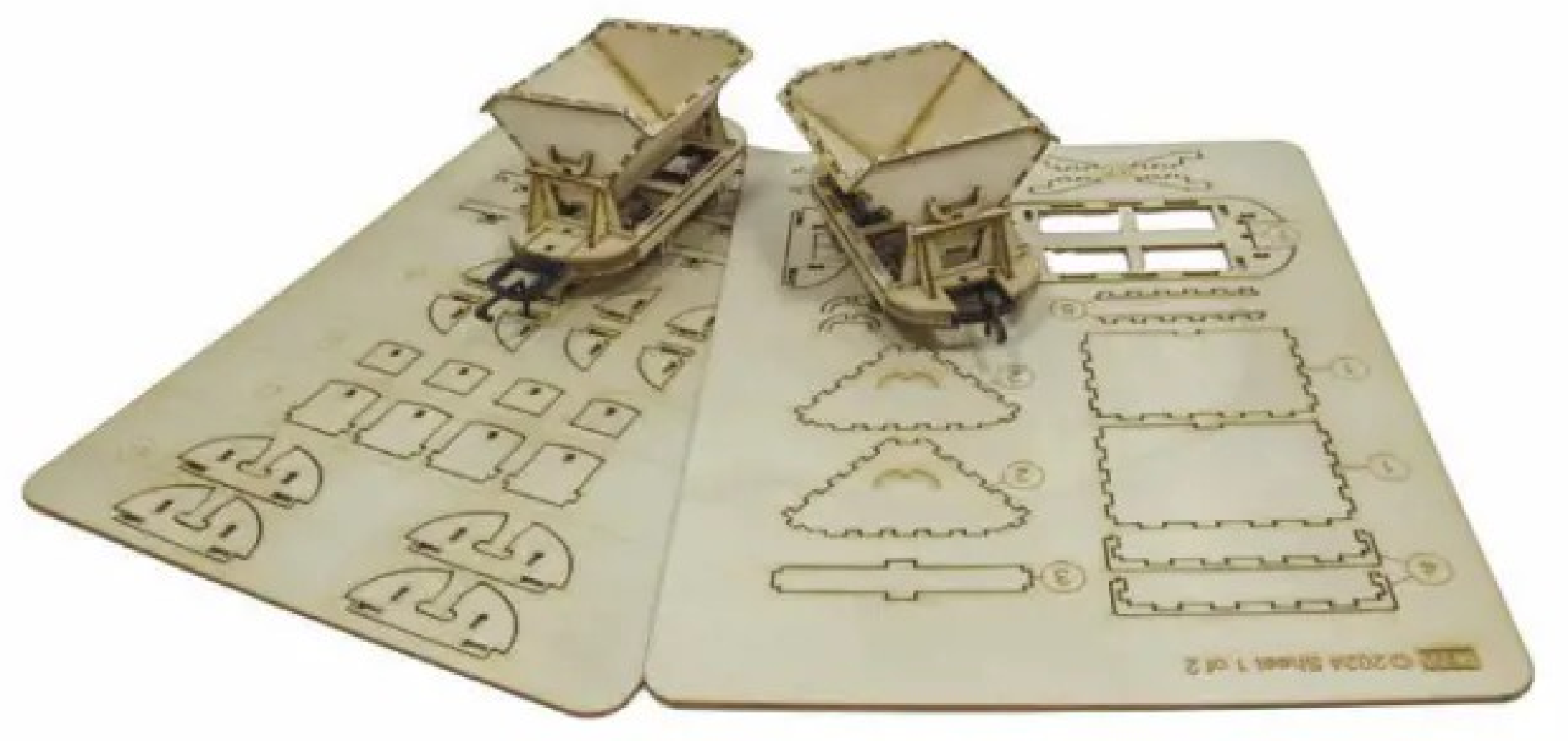
Since most narrow gauge modellers will need skips at some point, they are an obvious subject for a model, but being small, quite a challenge to produce, not helped by the V-skip body requiring a fine, but large, single moulding.

Peco has taken a novel route for their kit, producing it in laser-cut 1mm thick plywood. This keeps the production costs low but requires the modeller to do a bit of work. They are generic, but certainly look the part.





The parts for one wagon parts. Laser-cut plywood, plastic couplings and heavy metal wheels.



On the left, a wagon built with NEM pockets, on the right: the standard fitting for close coupling.

All the components are held in the wooden fret with very tiny nibs, which cut easily with a sharp knife. It's worth leaving them attached until required, as there are many small pieces that can easily be lost.

The big issue with NG7/O16.5 at the moment is couplings. Peco supplies some nice plastic tension-locks that can be fitted into the chassis for close coupling, or outside, plugged into a wooden NEM pocket. A third option is to couple them with a chain and pegs at the end of the chassis, just like the prototype. Sadly, none of these is fully compatible with those attached to Bachmann's RTR models, and even if spare Bachmann couplings do appear, unless they use NEM pockets, they won't fit these wagons easily. I know many existing 7mm NG modellers use tension-lock couplings, and for these, the Peco version will be ideal. Just to add to the fun, the wagon is assembled differently, depending on your choice, so you can't change your mind later.

Another issue with skips is that there is little bodywork to provide hiding space for weight. Peco has solved this perfectly, though, with heavier than normal 10mm metal disk wheels. Thanks to these, the finished wagons are very free-running.

It's fair to say that the first wagon I built was fiddly, and I thought I needed three hands at some points. Using fast-setting Roket card glue made things much easier, but it was still a challenge. However, with one under my belt, the second was built in about a third of the time. I haven't painted them yet. Before this, as the instructions point out, some filler will be required to hide the tabs and slots. These are metal wagons, so the builder will need to hide the wood grain.

These are nice, well-designed kits. I suspect that one day we will see RTR skips, but they are likely to cost quite a bit more, so Peco should still have the edge for modellers who wish to run prototypically long runs of the wagons.

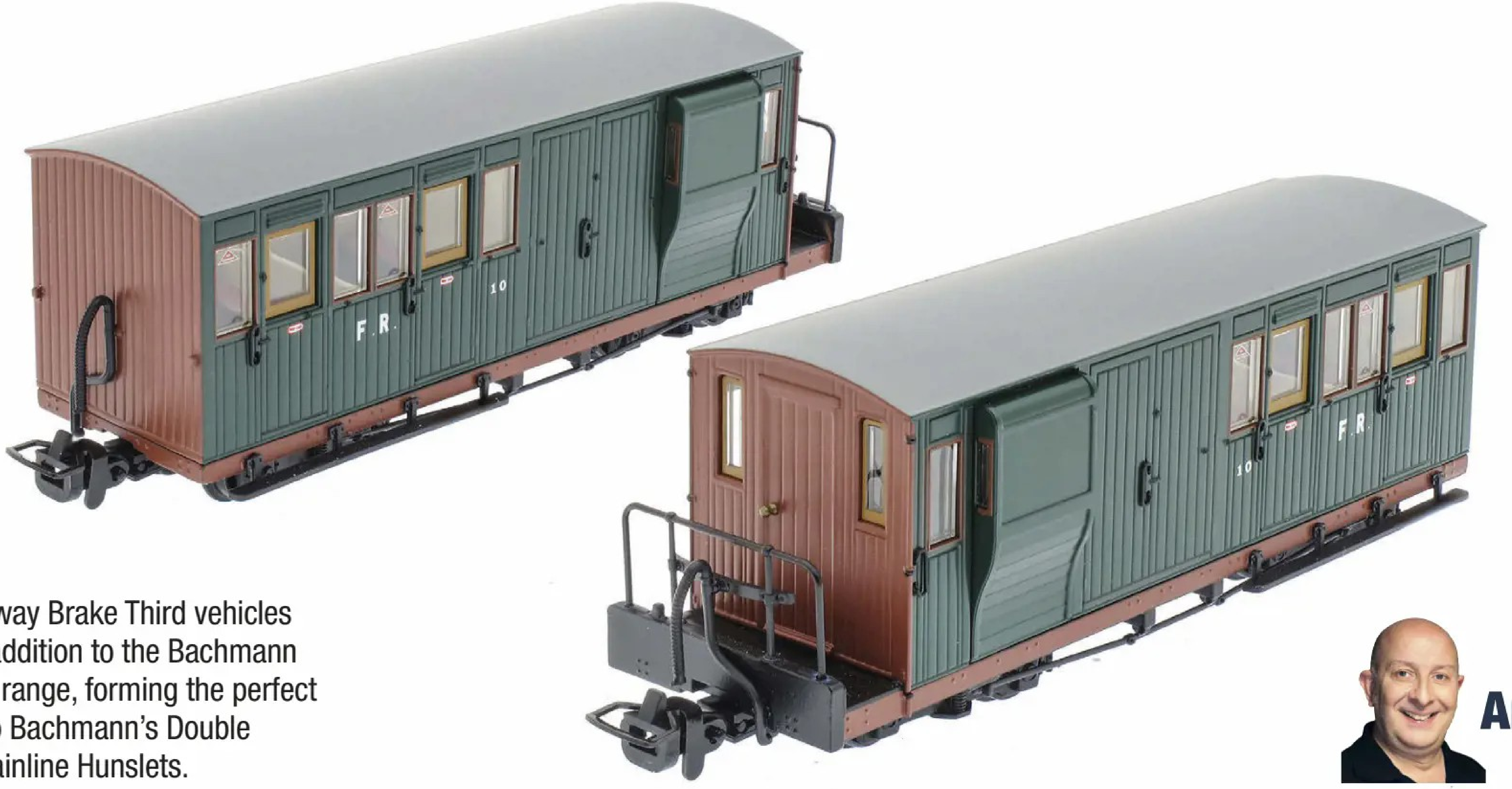
FACTFILE

Models: V-Skip Side Tip Wagons (3 pack)
Era: 1875 onwards
Construction: Plywood, plastic couplings and metal wheels
Weight: 12g per wagon

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Clever design
- ✓ Heavy wheels
- ✓ Value for money

Bachmann Ffestiniog Railway brake vehicles



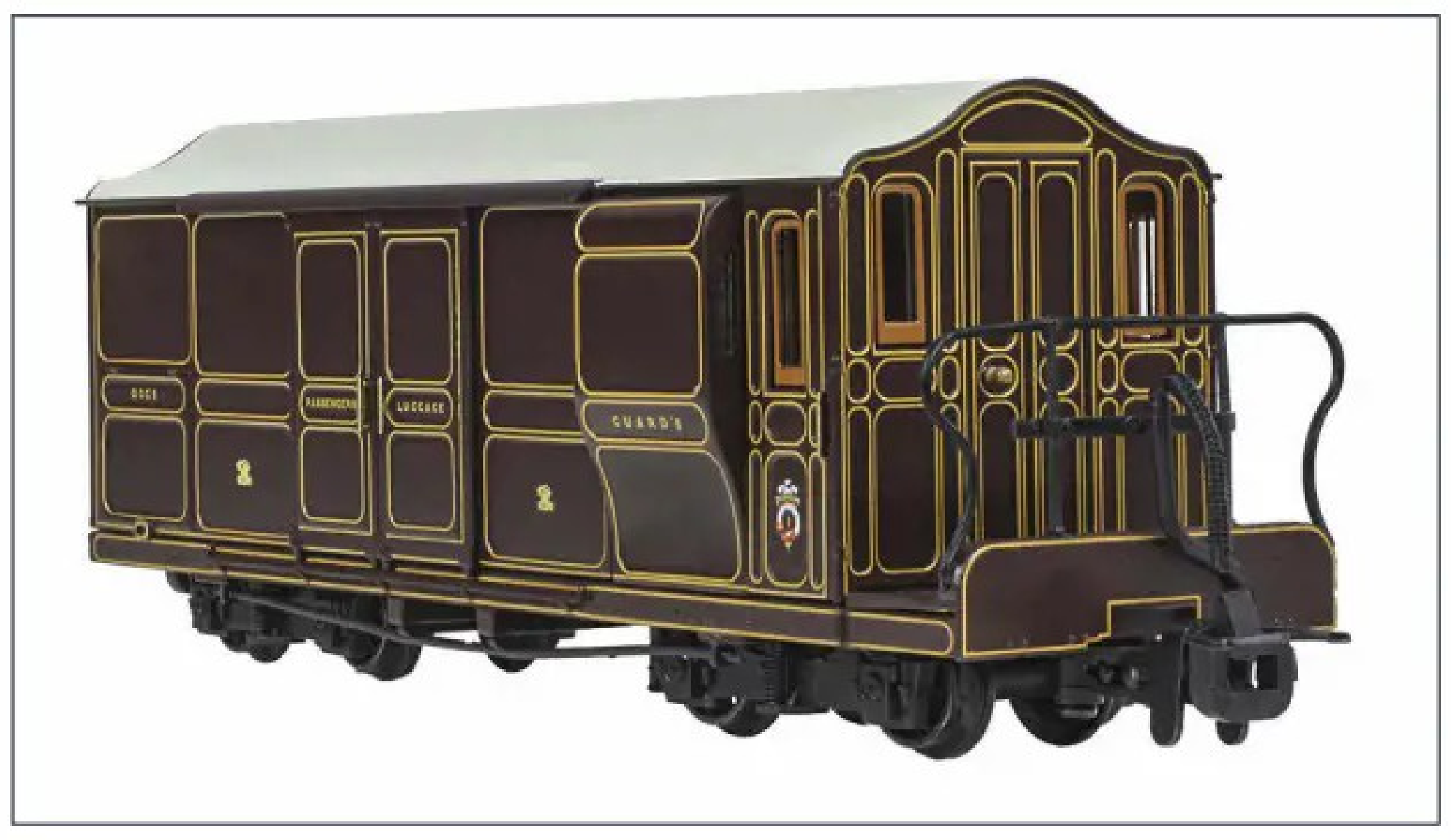
Ffestiniog Railway Brake Third vehicles are the latest addition to the Bachmann Narrow Gauge range, forming the perfect complement to Bachmann's Double Fairlies and Mainline Hunslets.

Andy York

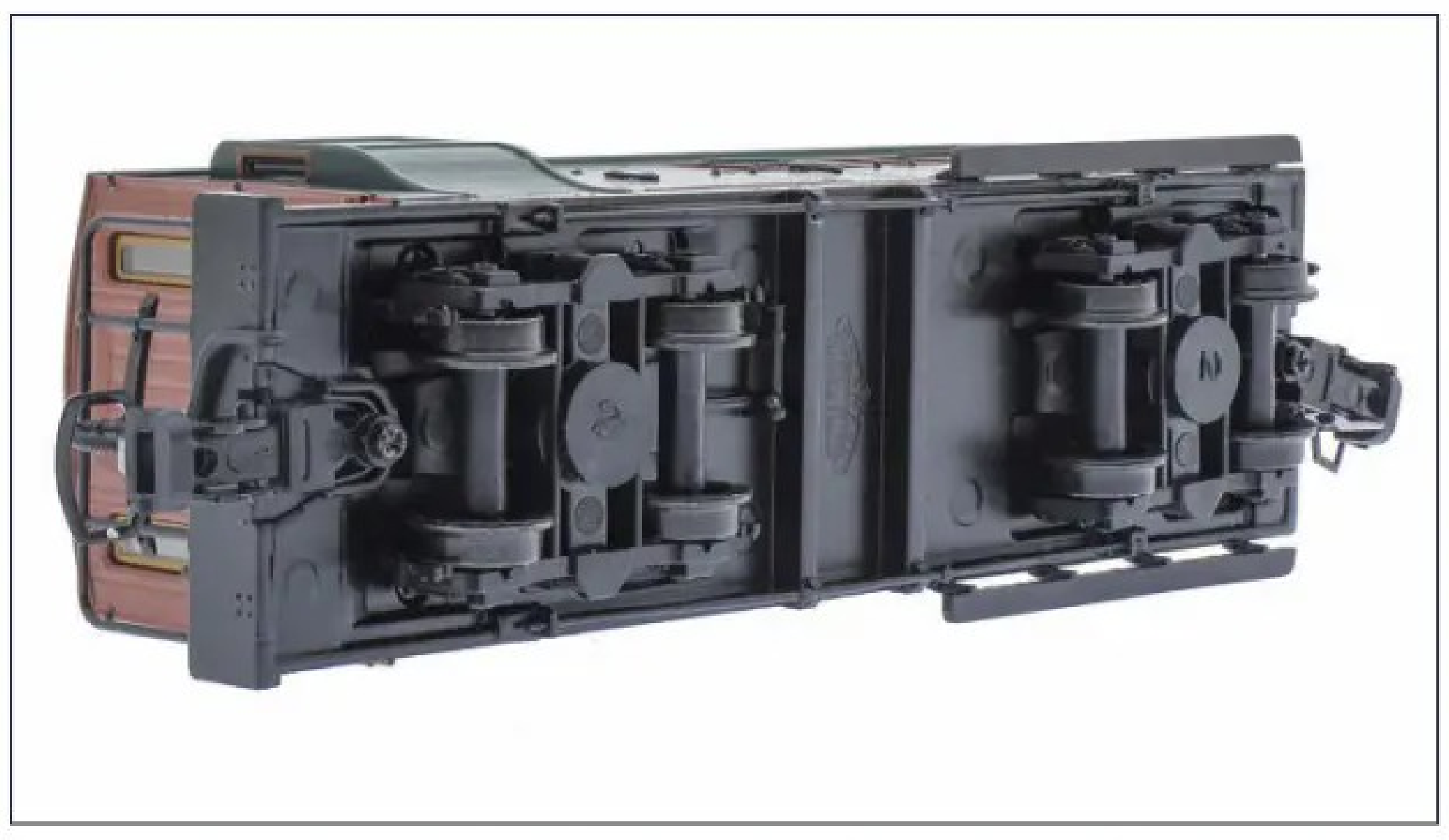
Following on from last month's review of Bachmann Narrow Gauge's new 'Tin cars' for their growing Ffestiniog Railway range, we can now buy bogie luggage brakes. Initially, three vans were built as brakes with a luggage compartment and a smaller compartment for dogs from 1873 with a distinctive 'Turtle Roof' profile. Bachmann has covered this with the exquisitely-lined livery in FR Plum as No.1 – a replica vehicle built in 2004. One of the three vans, No.2, survived and was rebuilt with a new body and conventional roof profile in 1921. The new body did away with the dog compartment and reduced the luggage area to form two third-class passenger compartments, and it is in this form we see our review sample.

The range thus includes the replica curly roof van, No.1, the FR green-liveried No.10 as pictured, No.2 in FR Yellow and Cream as worn after rebuilding in the 1920s and No.8 in crimson and cream, which matches much of the contemporary Ffestiniog fleet of coaching stock. The finish and decoration of the models is superb, with a nice sheen applied, well-defined printing to add to the quality moulding of the planking and panelling with separately-fitted parts for door handles and handrails, with the veranda end moulded handrail noteworthy for being fine but robust.

The footboards for the passenger compartments have nice bracket-mounting detail where they are affixed to the chassis frame, and beneath the model, there are fine but robust brake system pipes outboard of the accurate bogies and attached standard narrow-gauge couplings. Another lovely addition.



The original brake vehicles had a distinctive roof profile before rebuilding, giving rise to their 'curly roof' nickname.



The underside is fairly straightforward but includes representations of the brake systems.

The decoration is well done, with good density to the base colours and printed detail, including the 'No Smoking' window signs.

FACTFILE

Models:
394-076 No.1 FR Lined Plum
394-080 No. 10 FR Green with Red Ends
394-081 No. 2 FR Yellow & Crimson
394-085 No. 8 Crimson & Cream
Era: 1873 - present
Construction: Plastic chassis and body
Weight: 36g
Minimum curves: Radius 1
Accessory pack: Bufferbeam piping

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Detail decoration
- ✓ A characterful prototype

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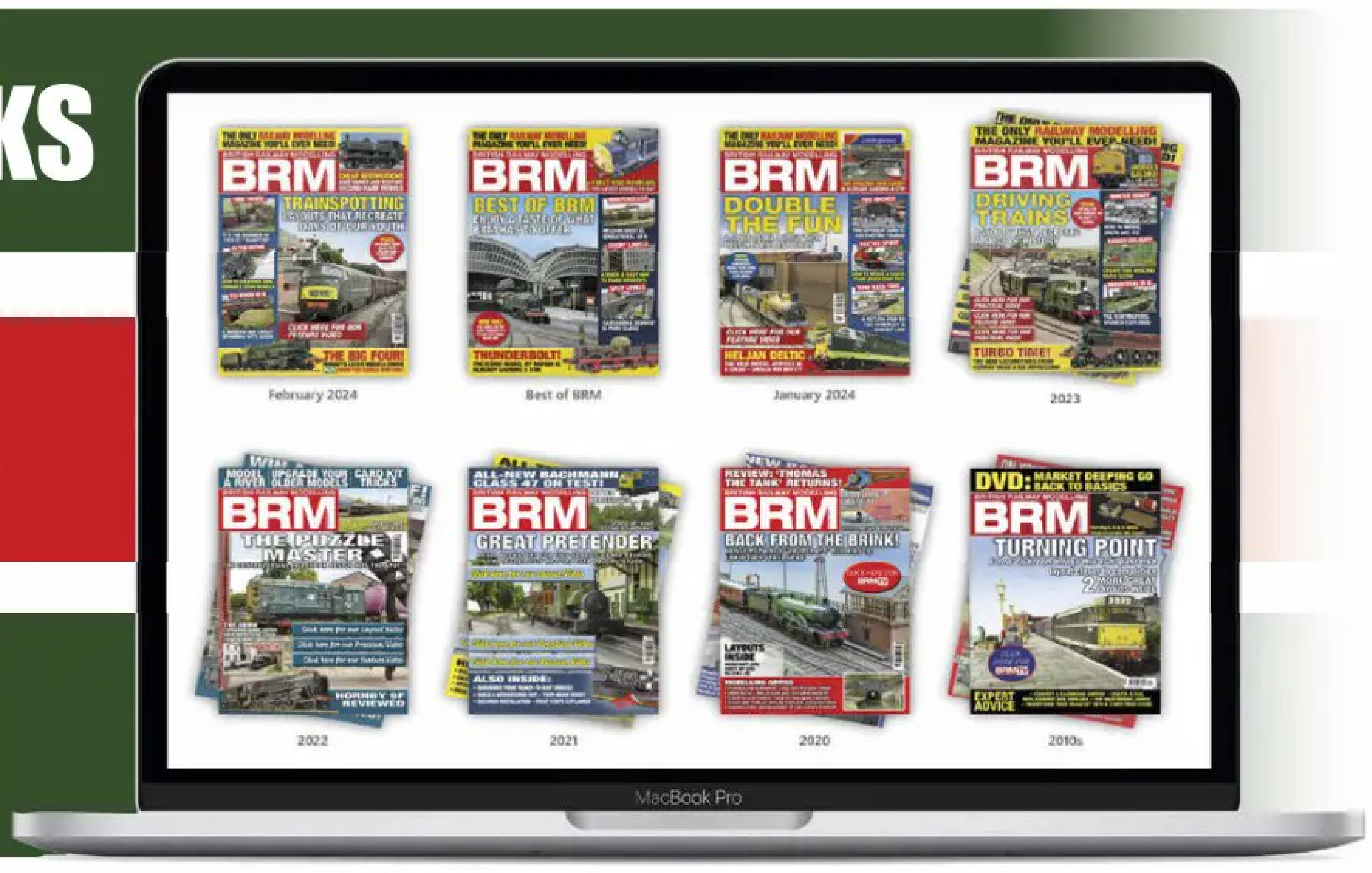

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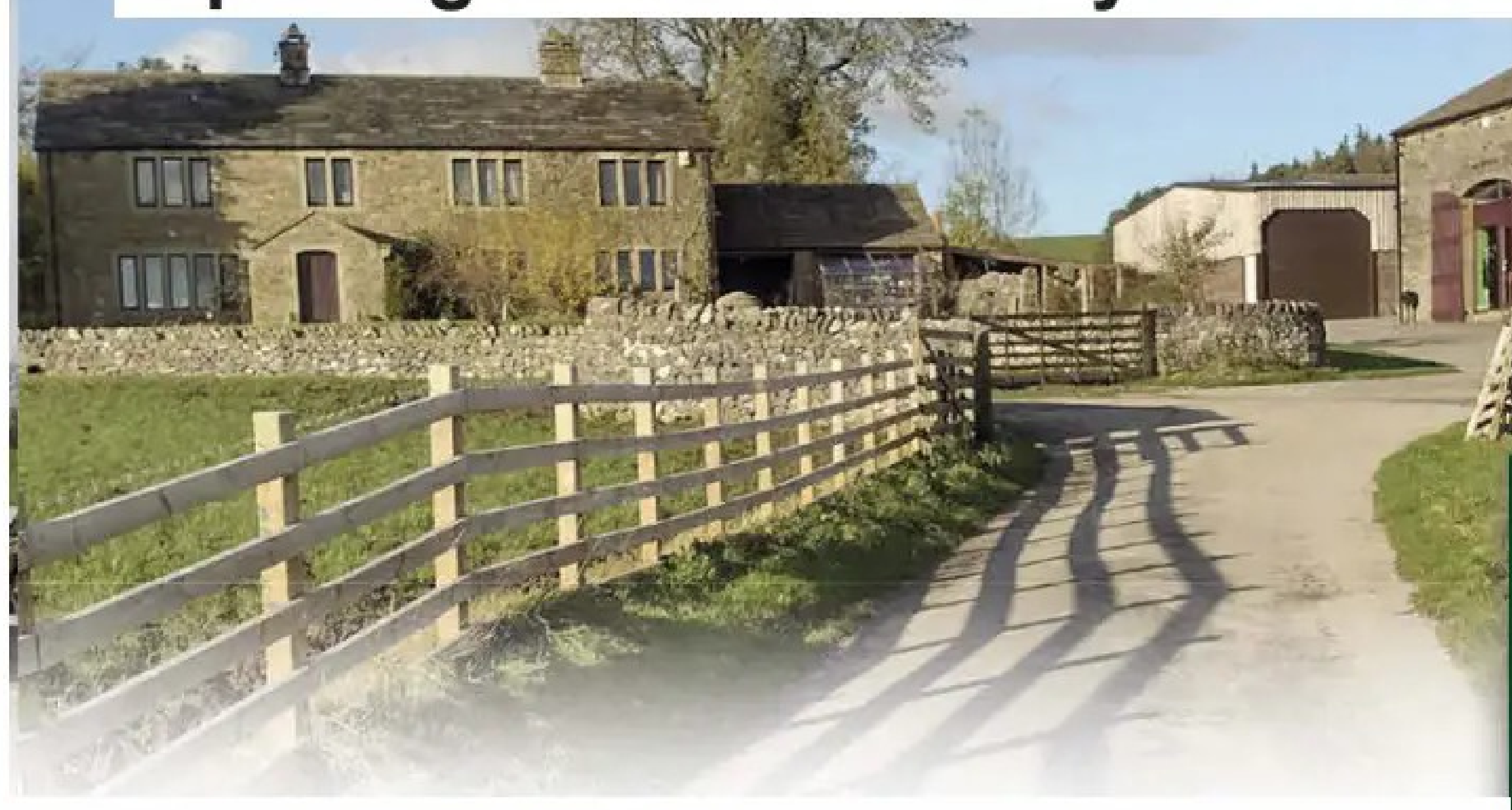

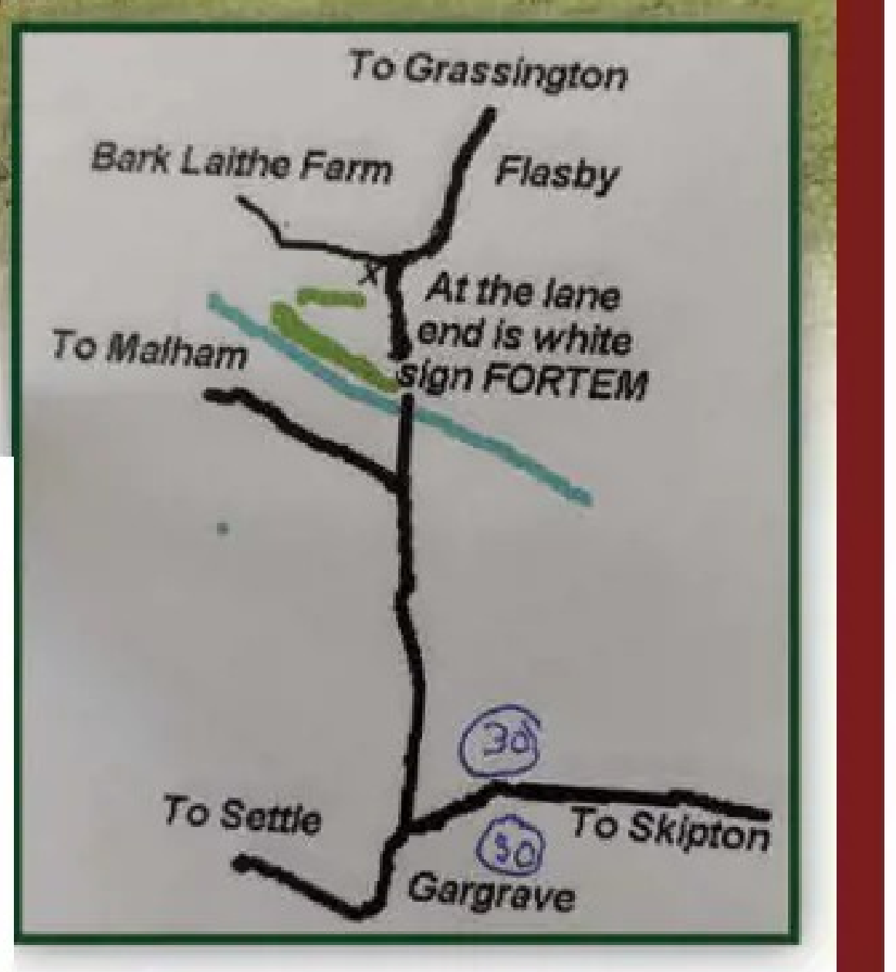

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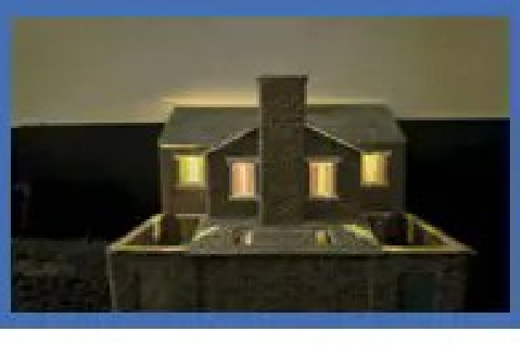

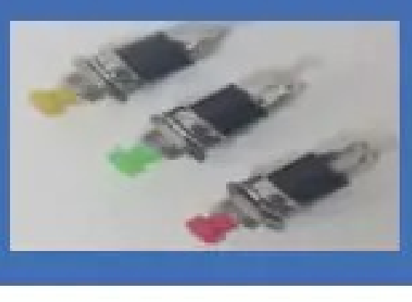

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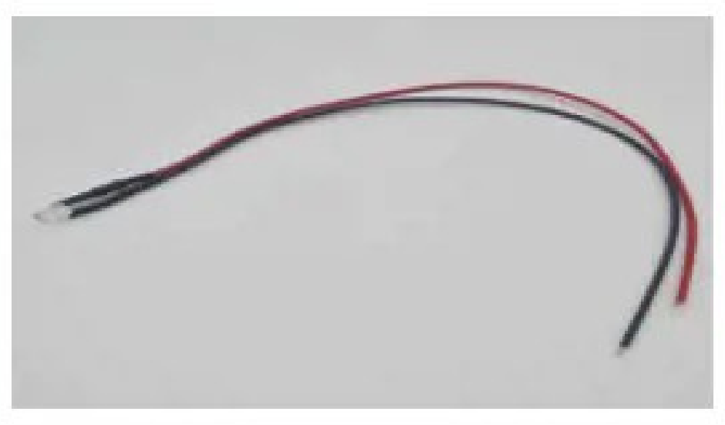

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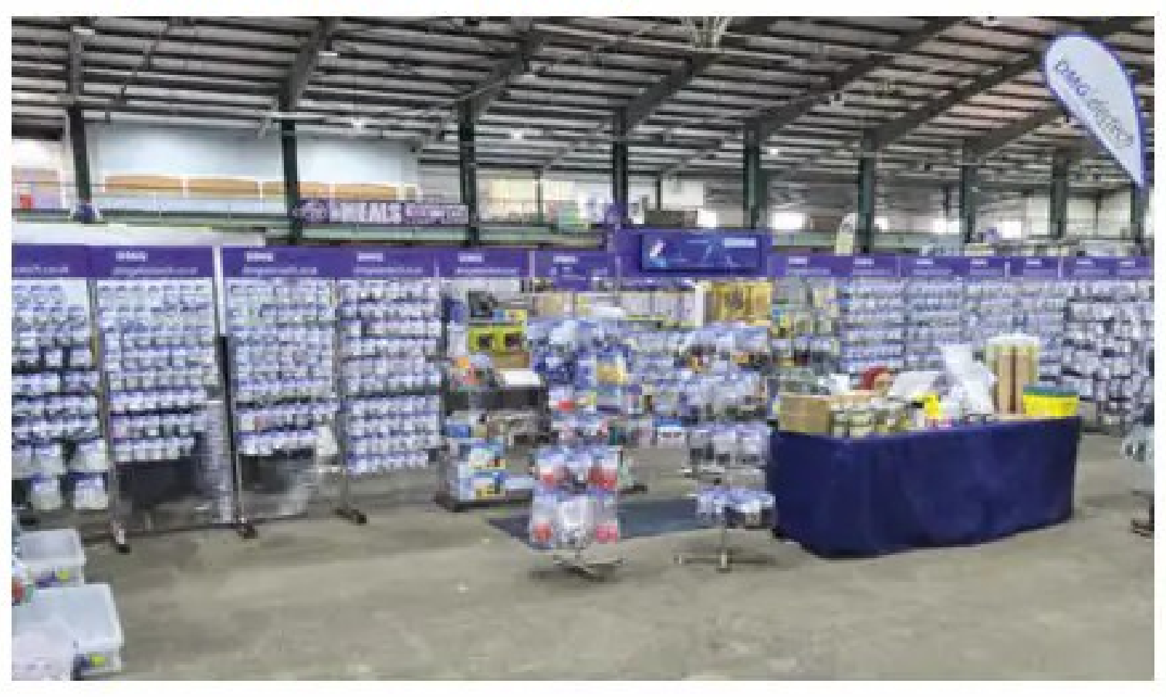
Dates for the diary...
2025 - Upcoming Exhibitions

- 08-09 February 2025 - Festival of British Railway Modeling (Doncaster Racecourse)
- 14-15 February 2025 - Burnham & District Model Railway Exhibition (Weston-Super-Mare)
- 01-02 March 2025 - Midlands Garden Rail Show (Warwick Event Centre, Lemington Spa)
- 15-16 March 2025 - The London Festival of Railway Modeling (Alexandra Palace)



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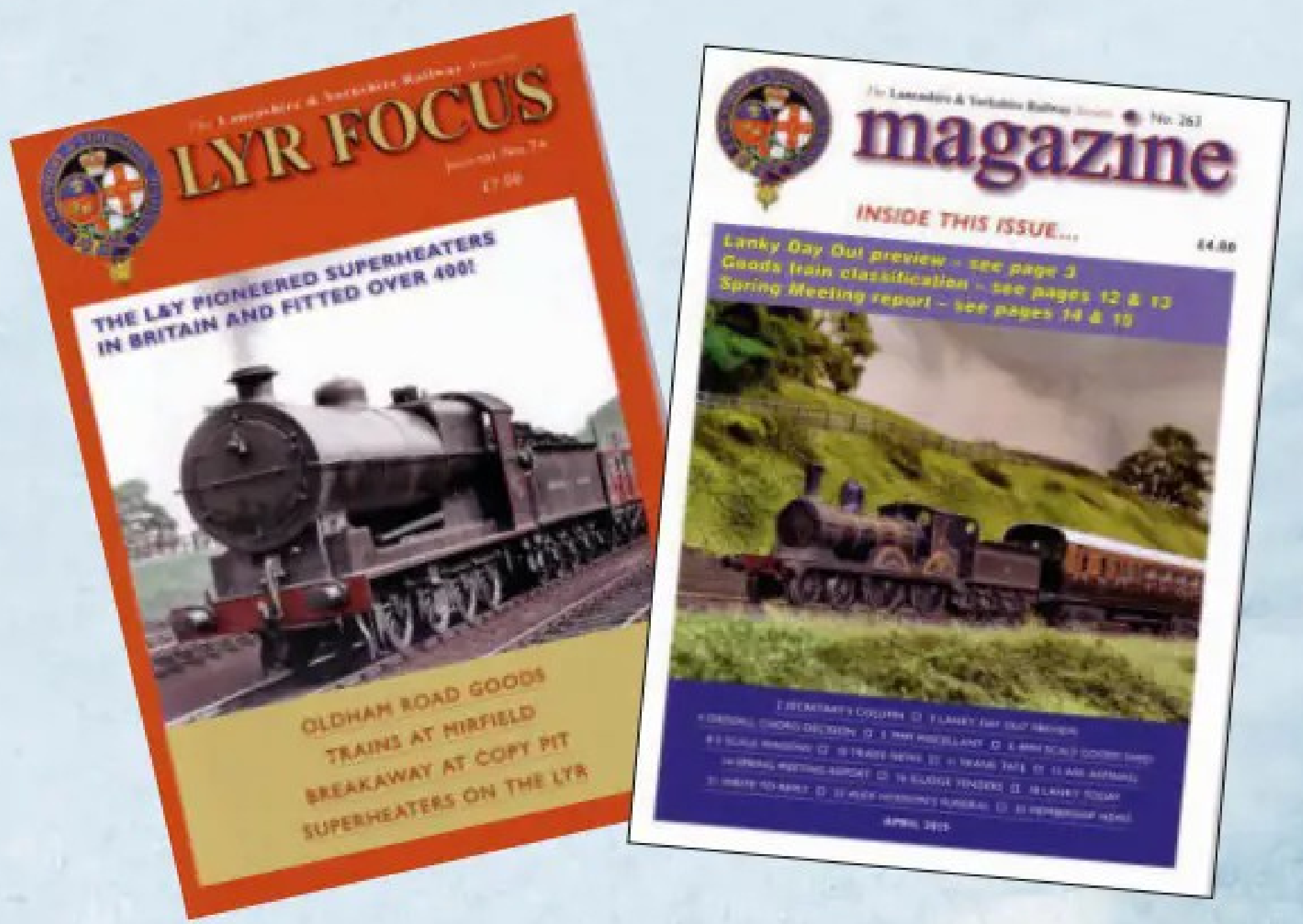

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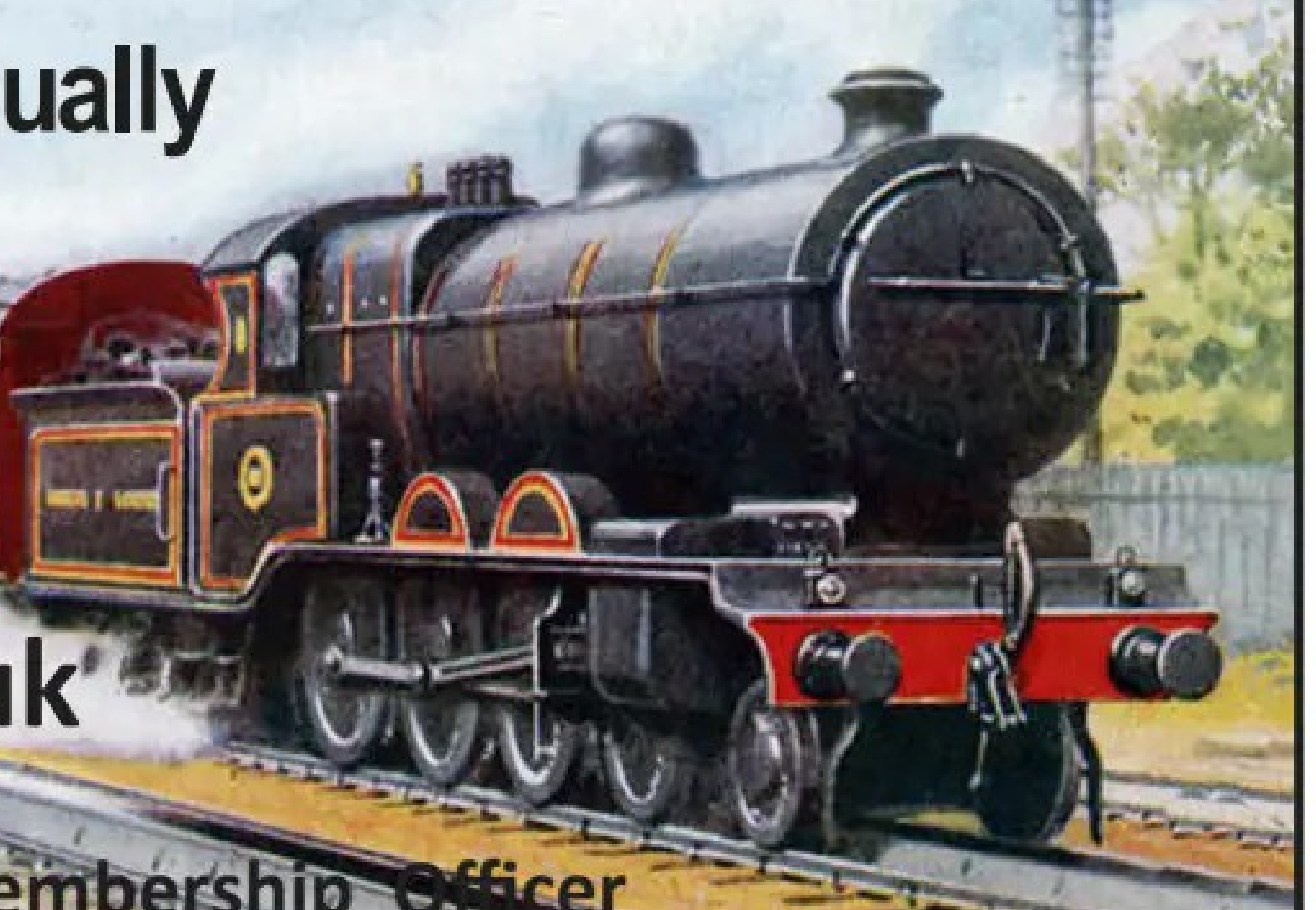

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Jan 11/12 - BOGNOR REGIS Model Rail Exh, Felpham Community College Felpham Way, Felpham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO22 8EL Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4.30 **Free Parking**
Jan 25/26 - SOUTHAMPTON Model Railway Exhibition, Barton Peveril College, Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh, SO50 5ZA. Sat 10-5. Sun 10-4.30
Feb 1/2 - ALTON - FebEx 2025 Alton Model Railway Group Exhibition, Eggars School, Anstey Road, Alton, Hants, GU34 4EQ. Sat 10.30-5. Sun 10.30-4.00.

Feb 1/2 - KENDAL Model Railway Exhibition,
Kendal Leisure Centre, Burton Road, Kendal, Cumbria, **LA9 7HX.**
Sat 10 - 5. Sun 10-4.30

Feb 15 - TONBRIDGE Model Railway Exhibition, Angel Centre, Tonbridge, Kent, **TN9 1SF** 10-5. www.tonbridgemrc.com Less than 5 mins walk from Tonbridge Railway Station.
Feb 15/16 - WESTON SUPER MARE Model Railway Exhibition, Priory Community School, Queens Way, Weston Super Mare, **BS22 6BP.** Sat 10am - 5pm. Sun 10am-4pm.
Mar 1 - KETTERING Gauge 'O' Guild Spring Show and Exhibition, Kettering Leisure Village, Thurston Drive, Kettering, **NN15 6PB.** Saturday 10 - 4. ***Plenty of FREE parking***
Mar 1/2 - PRESTON Preston & District Model Railway Exhibition, Sports Hall, Preston College, St Vincent's Rd, Fullwood, Preston, Lancashire, **PR2 8UR**. Sat 10-5pm, Sun 10-4.30

Mar 29/30 - NAILSEA Model Railway Exhibition,
Nailsea School, Mizzymead Road, Nailsea, **BS48 2LE.**
Sat 10-5pm, Sun 10-4.

April 5/6 - MACCELSFIELD Model Railway Group Exh, Tytherington School, Manchester Road, Macclesfield, **SK10 2EE.** Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4.30. **Plenty of FREE Car parking**

April 19-21 - YORK Model Railway Show,
The Knavesmire Stand, Racecourse Road, York. **YO23 1EX**
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April 26 - LUTON Model Railway Exhibition, Stopsley High School, St Thomas' Road, Luton, **LU2 7UX.** Sat 10.30-5pm.

April 26/27 - BIRMINGHAM NEC
Model World LIVE,
Hall 17, NEC Birmingham **B40 1NT.**
Saturday 10 - 5. Sunday 10 - 4.

May 10/11 - CALNE Model Railway Show, Calne Leisure Centre, White Horse Way, Calne, **SN11 0SP.** Sat 10 - 5, Sun 10 - 4.30.
May 31 - KEMPTON PARK Gauge 0 Guild Southern Show, Kempton Park Racecourse, Staines Road, Sunbury on Thames, **TW16 5AQ.** Sat 10-4. **FREE Parking with Railway Station on Site**
June 14/15 - SUTTON COLDFIELD DEMU Showcase 2025 Model Railway Exhibition, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall, Upper Clifton Road, Sutton Coldfield, **B73 6DA.** **Tickets valid on BOTH days**
July 19 - BAKEWELL - Gauge 1 North 2025, The Agricultural Business Centre, Haddon Rd, Bakewell, Derbyshire, **DE45 1AH.** Sat 10-4.30.
Aug 9 - BEXHILL Model Railway Exhibition, St Richards Catholic College, Ashdown Rd, Bexhill on Sea, **TN40 1SE.** Sat 10-5. **FREE PARKING ON SITE**
Sep 6/7 - STAFFORD GUILDEX 2025, Gauge 0 Guild Exhibition, Bingley Hall, Stafford Showground, Weston Rd, Stafford, **ST18 0BD.** Sat 10 - 5, Sun 10 - 4. www.gauge0guild.com
Oct 11/12 – ALDERSHOT Model Rail Exh, Farnham MRC, Alderwood Leisure Centre, Tongham Rd, Aldershot, **GU12 4AS.** **Show guide inc in admission and FREE Car Parking**
Oct 18/19 - UCKFIELD Model Railway Exhibition, Uckfield Civic Centre, Civic Approach, Uckfield, East Sussex, **TN22 1AE.** Sat /Sun 10-5.
Nov 1/2 – SPALDING Model Railway Exhibition, Springfield Events Centre, Camel Gate, Spalding, Lincolnshire, **PE12 6ET.** Sat 10 - 5 Sun 10 - 4.30. www.spaldingmrc.co.uk - Plenty of FREE Parking
Dec 6 - WIGAN Gauge O Guild Winter Show, Robin Park Leisure Centre, Loire Drive, Newton, Wigan, **WN5 0UL.** Sat 10 - 4.

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Oct 10/11 - ALDERSHOT Model Railway Exhibition, Farnham MRC, Alderwood Leisure Centre, Tongham Road, Aldershot, **GU12 4AS.** **Show guide included in admission and FREE Car Parking**

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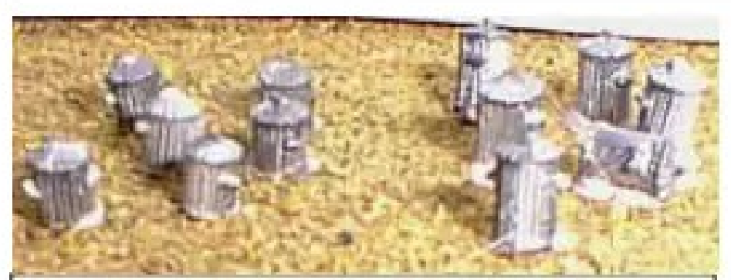

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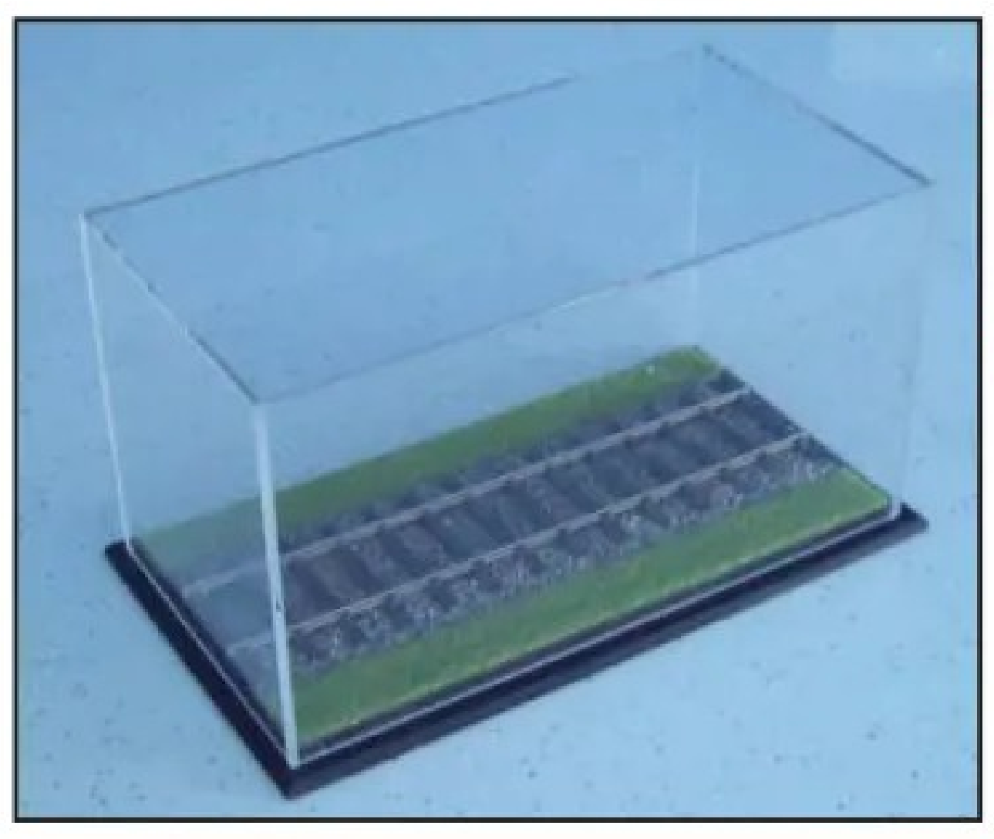

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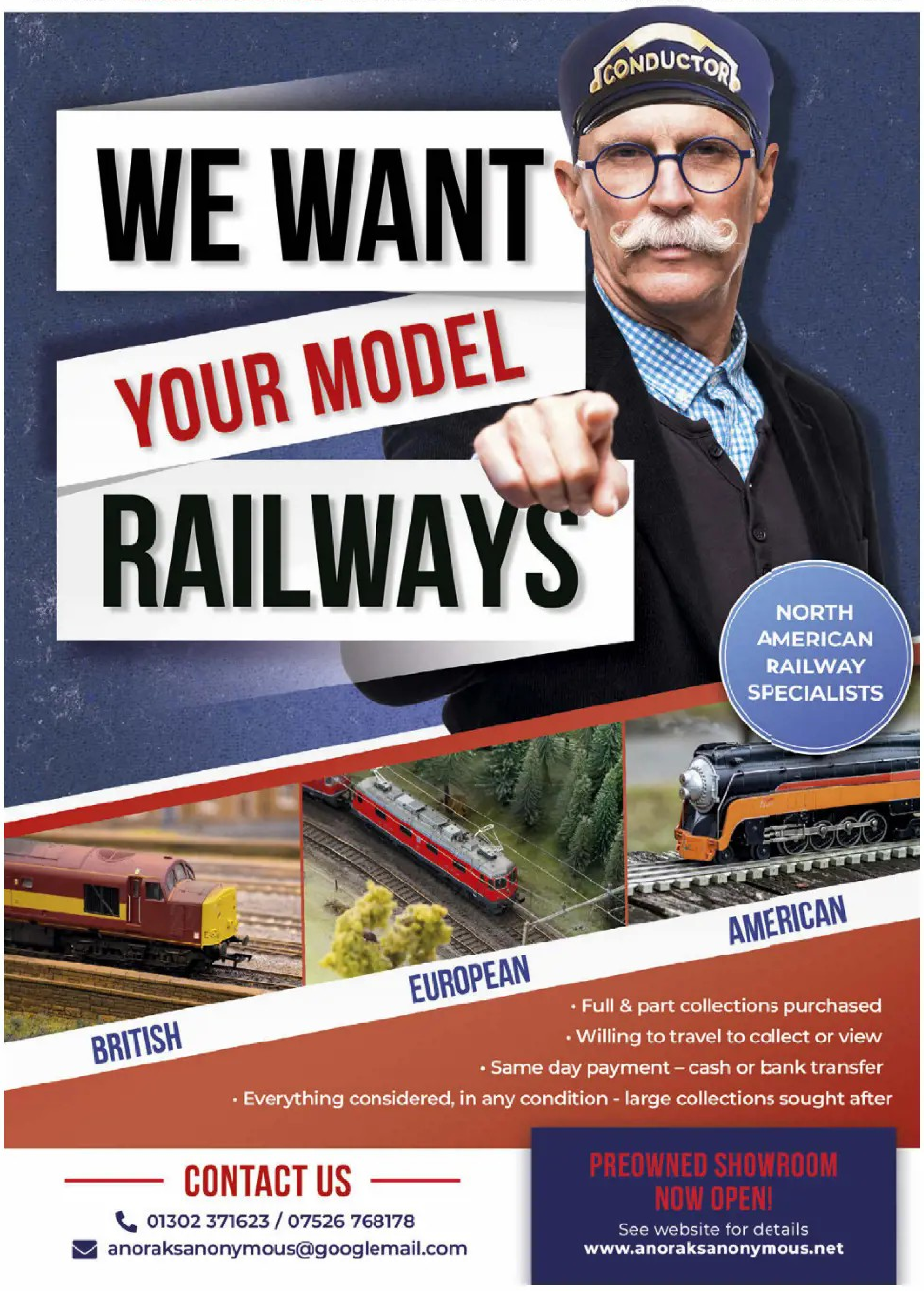

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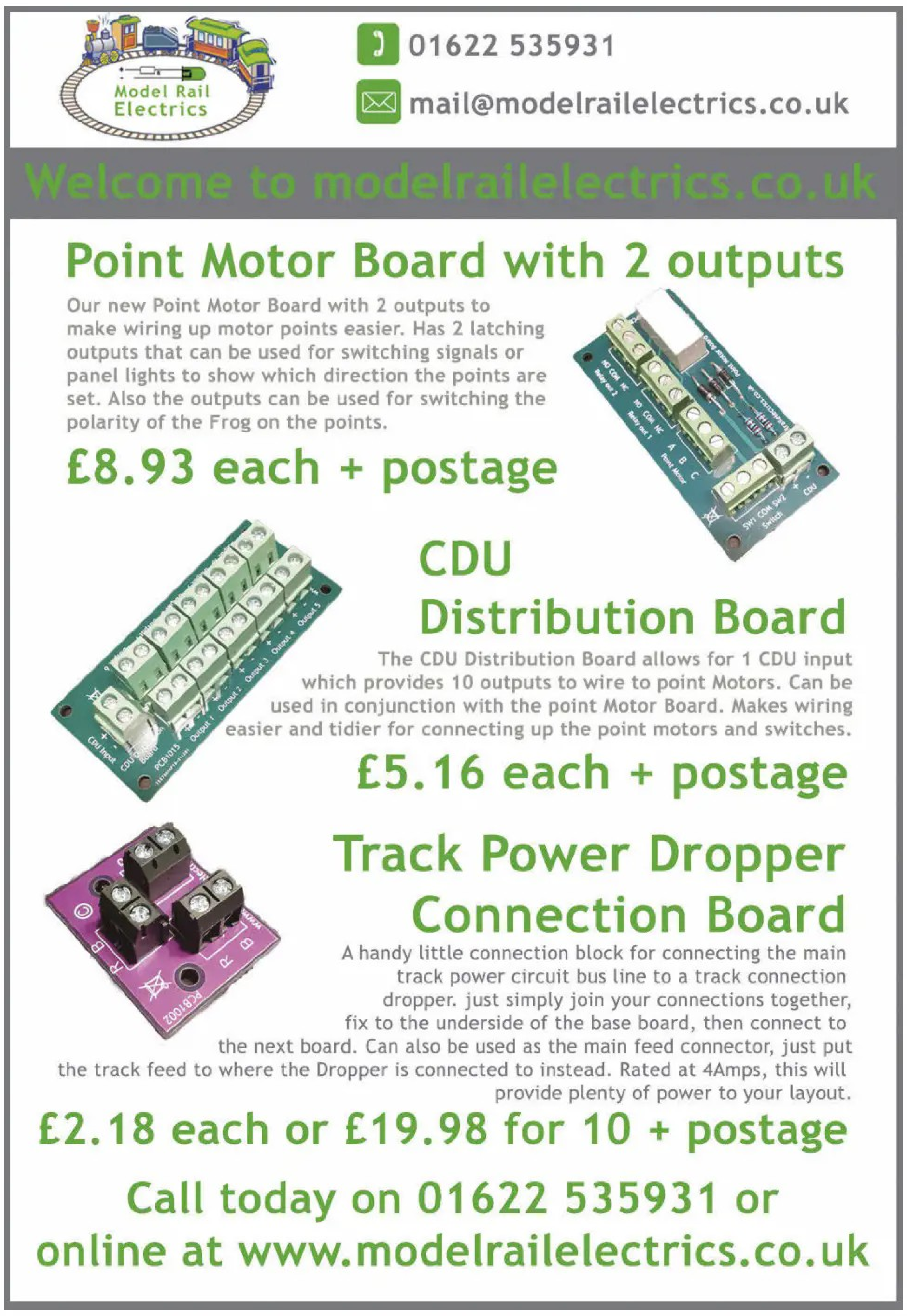
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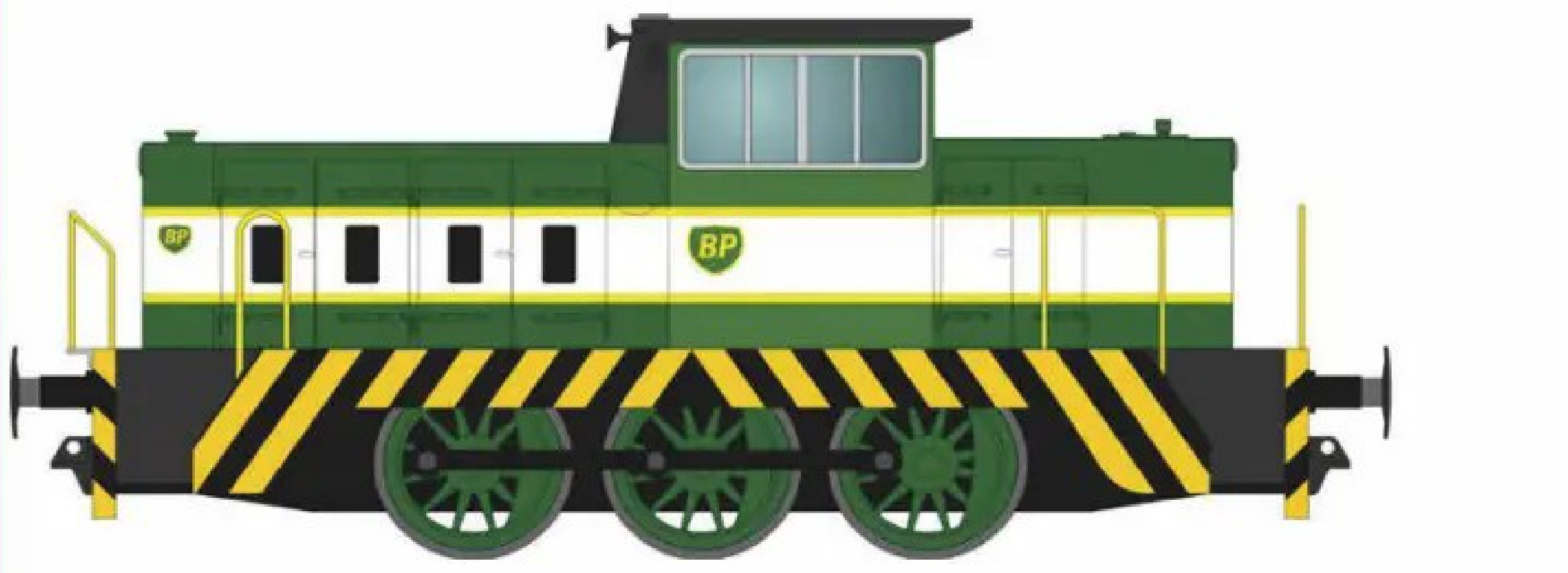

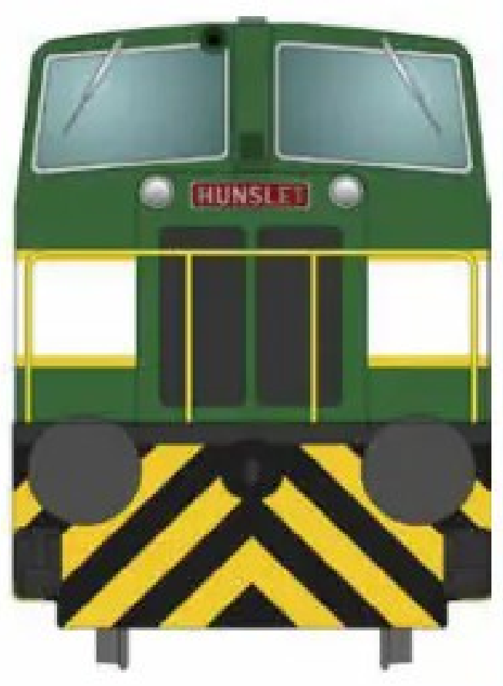

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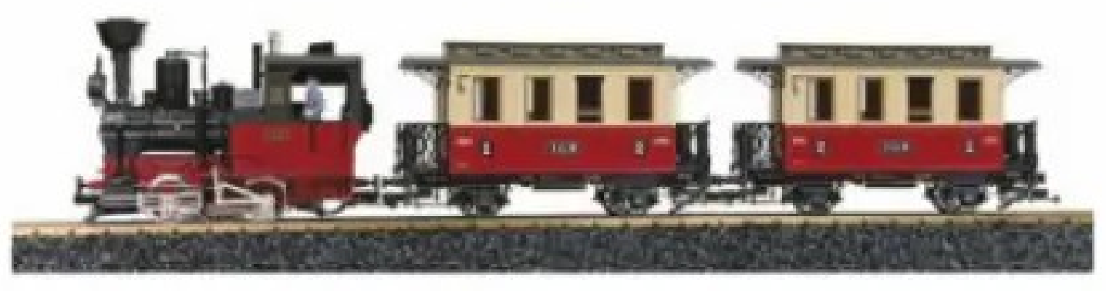

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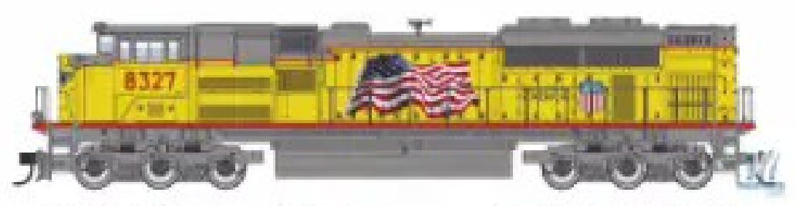

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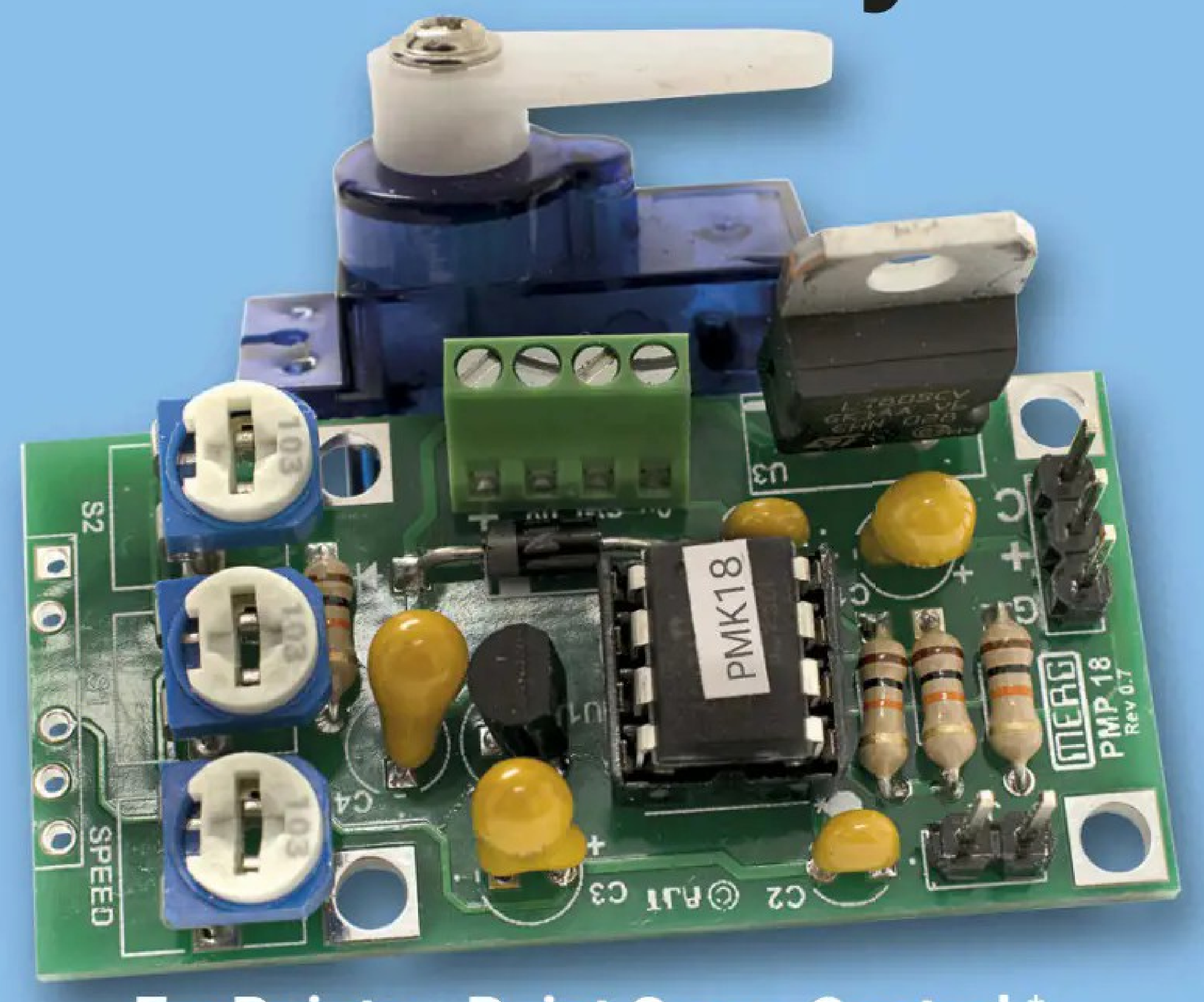

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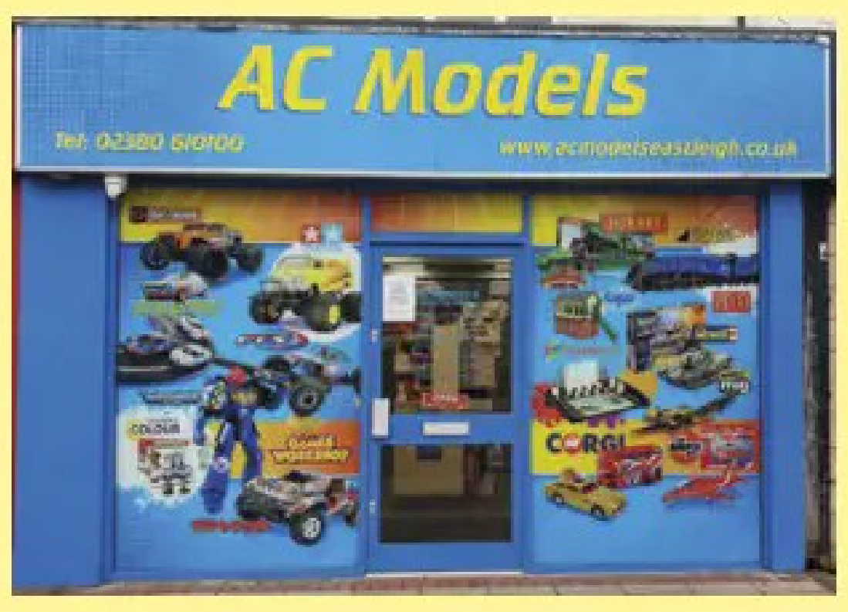
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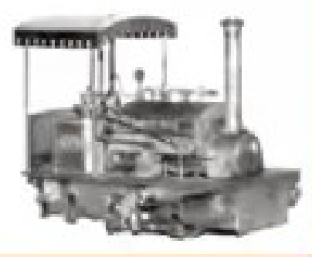

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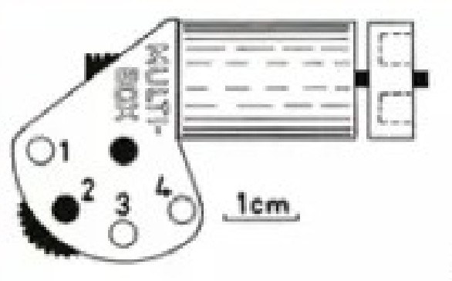

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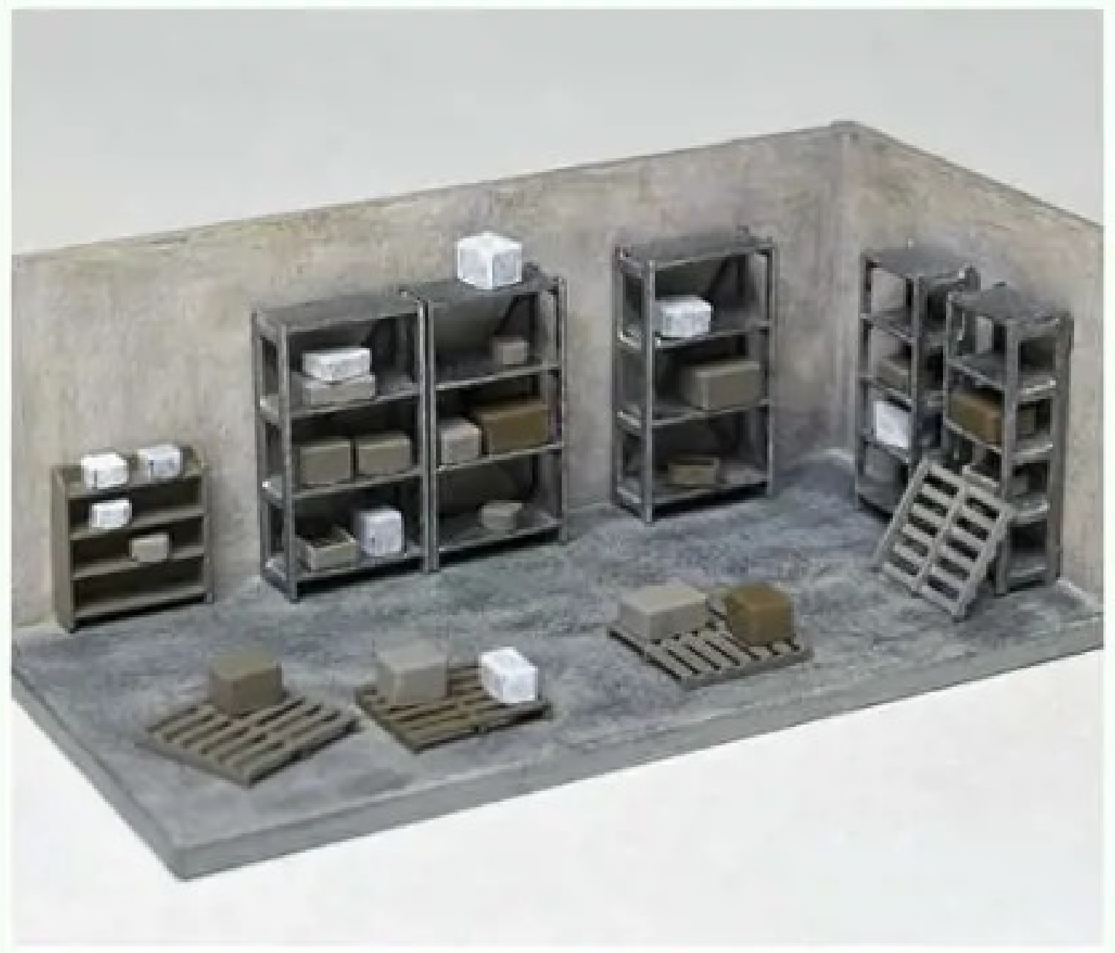

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BufferStop

The National Show is back!

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We did it!

Over 60 layouts, 100 traders, plus plenty of clubs and societies, were all packed into Hall 5 of the NEC in November. Walking around on the Friday night, the show looked great. We'd chosen the best of the feature layouts from BRM as our main attractions and made sure they were built by the sort of people who could put on a show.

All we had to do was wait for the doors to open on Saturday – and when they did, the crowds streamed through in their thousands. If this is a dying hobby, there are a lot of people who missed that news!

On the World of Railways stand, it wasn't long before visitors began to compliment us on the event. Especially nice were those exhibition managers who applied a more professional eye to the whole thing, and knew how much work it had taken.

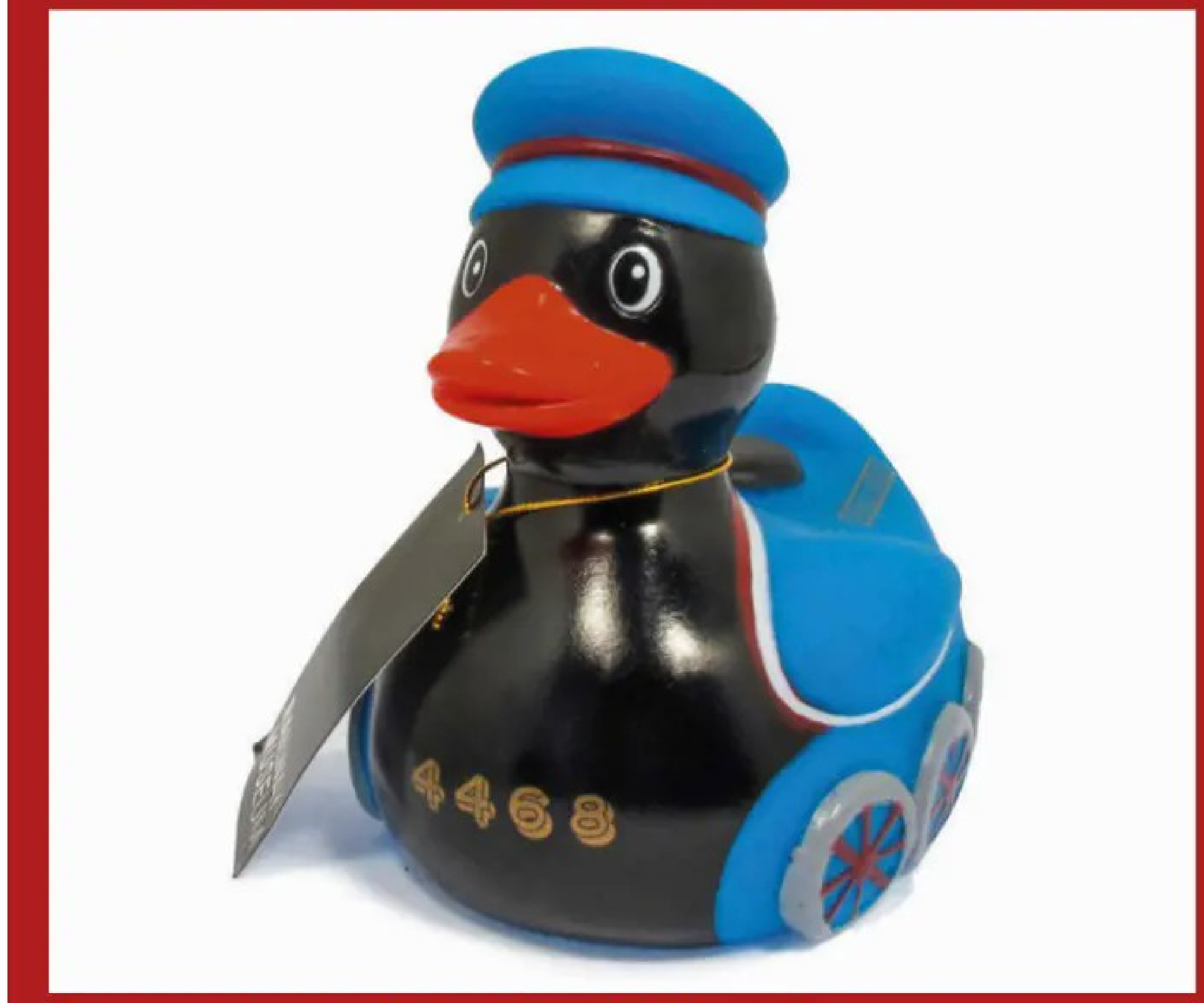
So, in nine months, we'd gone from a blank piece of paper to a bustling show. That's good, but next time, we can build on this and have ideas to make it even better. So, save the date: November 22 and 23, 2025. We'll see you there!

This month in pictures...

Our publisher, Steve, tried to take the train home. Or at least to the other end of the hall.

In aid of RNIB
Ride for Sight
Taff's Triumph
BRM

Many of the team took part in a cycle ride on the Oxford Diecast stand, raising money for the RNIB.



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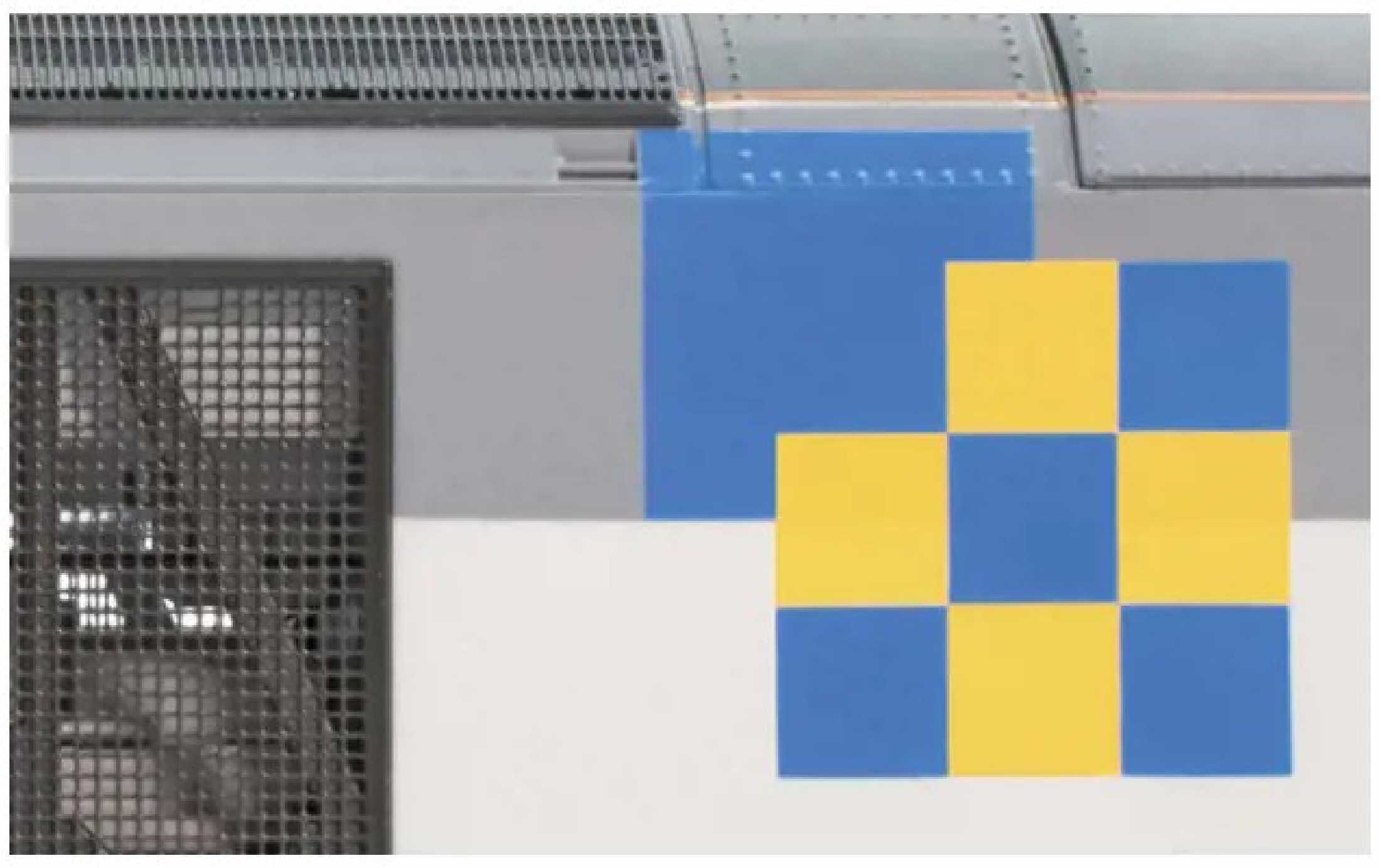

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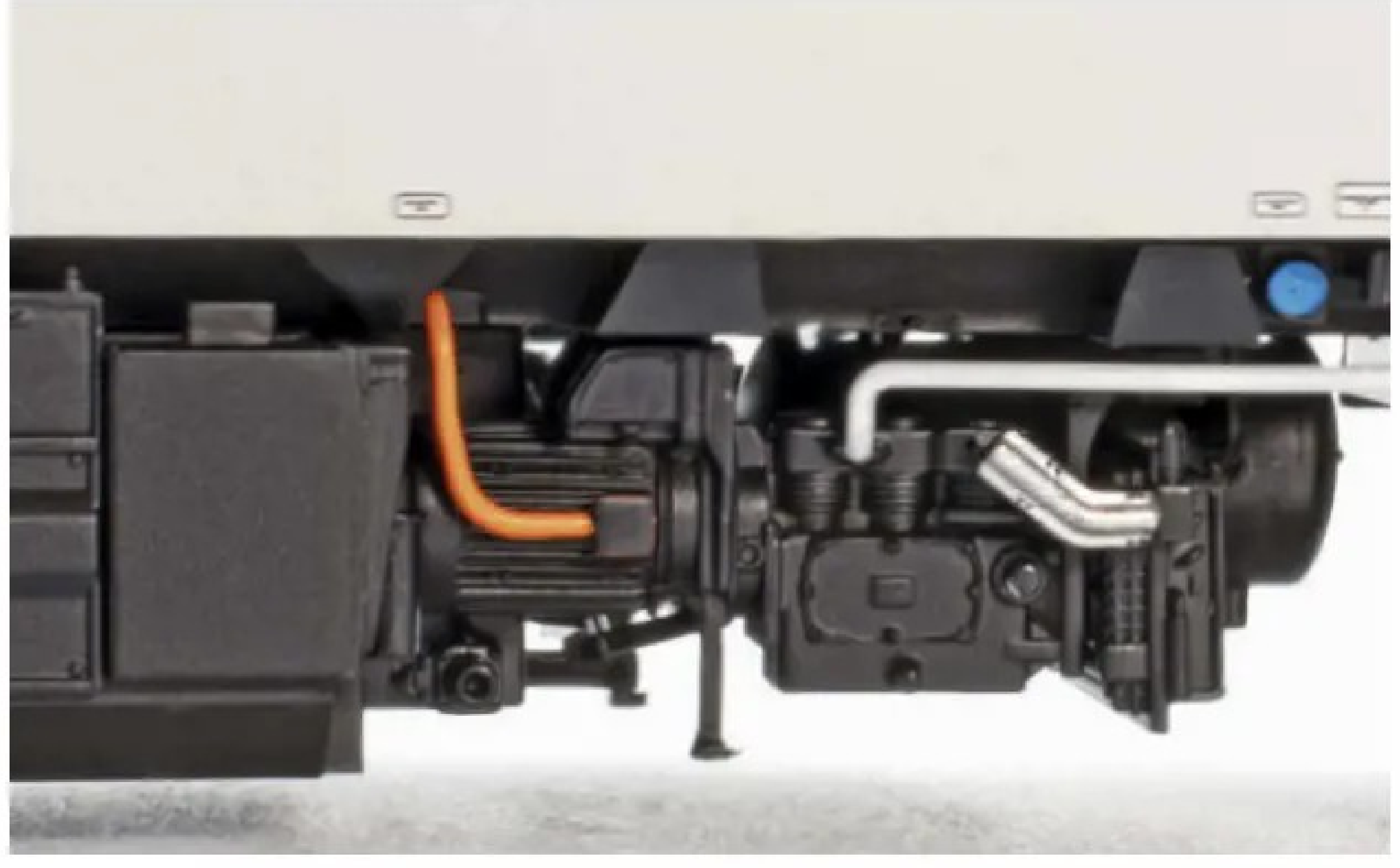

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